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Golden Treasury Series

THE TRIAL & DEATH OF SOCRATES

Ὁ δ' ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ

'An unexamined life is not worth living.'

(PLATO, *Apol.* 38 A.)

THE TRIAL AND DEATH OF SOCRATES

BEING

THE EUTHYPHRON, APOLOGY, CRITO, AND PHÆDO OF PLATO

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS book, which is intended principally for the large and increasing class of readers who wish to learn something of the masterpieces of Greek literature, and who cannot easily read them in Greek, was originally published by Messrs. Macmillan in a different form. Since its first appearance it has been revised and corrected throughout, and largely re-written. The chief part of the Introduction is new. It is not intended to be a general essay on Socrates, but only an attempt to explain and illustrate such points in his life and teaching as are referred to in these dialogues, which, taken by themselves, contain Plato's description of his great master's life, and work, and death.

The books which were most useful to me in writing it are Professor Zeller's *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, and the edition of the

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Apology by the late Rev. James Riddell, published after his death by the delegates of the Clarendon Press. His account of Socrates is singularly striking. I found the very exact and literal translation of the *Phædo* into colloquial English by the late Mr. E. M. Cope often very useful in revising that dialogue. I have also to thank various friends for the patience with which they have looked over parts of my work in manuscript, and for the many valuable hints and suggestions which they have given me.

As a rule I have used the text of the Zurich editors. Twice or thrice, in the *Phædo*, I have taken a reading from the text of Schanz: but it seems to me that what makes his edition valuable is its *apparatus criticus* rather than its text.

F. J. C.

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INTRODUCTION.

THESE dialogues contain a unique picture of Socrates in the closing scenes of his life, his trial, his imprisonment, and his death. And they contain a description also of that unflagging search after truth, that persistent and merciless examination and sifting of men who were wise only in their own conceit, to which his latter years were devoted. Within these limits he is the most familiar figure of ancient Greek history. No one else stands out before us with so individual and distinct a personality of his own. Of the rest of Socrates' life, however, we are almost completely ignorant. All that we know of it consists of a few scattered and isolated facts, most of which are referred to in these dialogues. A considerable number of stories are told about him by late writers: but to scarcely any of them can credit be given. Plato and Xenophon are almost the only trustworthy authorities about him who remain; and they describe him almost altogether as an old man. The earlier part of his life is to us scarcely more than a blank.

Socrates was born very shortly before the

year 469 B.C.[1] His father, Sophroniscus, was a sculptor: his mother, Phænarete, a midwife. Nothing definite is known of his moral and intellectual development. There is no specific record of him at all until he served at the siege of Potidæa (432 B.C.-429 B.C.) when he was nearly forty years old. All that we can say is that his youth and manhood were passed in the most splendid period of Athenian or Greek history.[2] It was the time of that wonderful outburst of genius in art, and literature, and thought, and statesmanship, which was so sudden and yet so unique. Athens was full of the keenest intellectual and political activity. Among her citizens between the years 460 B.C. and 420 B.C. were men who in poetry, in history, in sculpture, in architecture, are our masters still. Æschylus' great *Trilogy* was brought out in the year 458 B.C., and the poet died two years later, when Socrates was about fifteen years old. Sophocles was born in 495 B.C., Euripides in 481 B.C. They both died about 406 B.C., some seven years before Socrates. Pheidias, the great sculptor, the artist of the Elgin marbles, which are now in the British Museum, died in 432 B.C. Pericles, the supreme statesman and orator,[3] whose name marks an epoch in the history of civilisation, died in 429 B.C. Thucydides, the historian, whose history is 'a posses-

[1] *Apol.* 17 D. *Crito*, 52 E.

[2] See the account of this period given by Professor Curtius in his *History of Greece*, Bk. iii. ch. 3.

[3] ὁ πάνυ. Xen. *Mem.* iii. 5. 1.

sion for all ages,'[1] was born in 471 B.C., about the same time as Socrates, and died probably between 401 B.C. and 395 B.C. Ictinus, the architect, completed the Parthenon in 438 B.C. There have never been finer instruments of culture than the art and poetry and thought of such men as these. Socrates, who in 420 B.C. was about fifty years old, was contemporary with them all. He must have known and conversed with some of them: for Athens was not very large,[2] and the Athenians spent almost the whole of their day in public. To live in such a city was in itself no mean training for a man, though he might not be conscious of it. The great object of Pericles' policy had been to make Athens the acknowledged intellectual capital and centre of Greece, 'the Prytaneum of all Greek wisdom.'[3] Socrates himself speaks with pride in the *Apology* of her renown for 'wisdom and power of mind.'[4] And Athens gave her citizens another kind of training also, through her political institutions. From having been the head of the confederacy of Delos, she had grown to be an Imperial, or, as her enemies

[1] κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί. Thucyd. i. 22, 5.

[2] In 441 B.C. there was a scrutiny of citizenship, and some 5000 men who were unable to prove their descent from Athenian parents on both sides were disfranchised. The qualified citizens were found to number a little over 14,000.

[3] Protagoras, 337 D. Pericles' funeral oration (Thucyd. ii. 35-46) deserves careful study in this connection. It is a statement of the Athenian ideal in the best days of Athens.

[4] *Apol.* 29 D.

called her, a tyrant city. She was the mistress of a great empire, ruled and administered by law. The Sovereign Power in the State was the Assembly, of which every citizen, not under disability, was a member, and at which attendance was by law compulsory. There was no representative government, no intervening responsibility of ministers. The Sovereign people in their Assembly directly administered the Athenian empire. Each individual citizen was thus brought every day into immediate contact with matters of Imperial importance. His political powers and responsibilities were very great. He was accustomed to hear questions of domestic administration, of legislation, of peace and war, of alliances, of foreign and colonial policy, keenly and ably argued on either side. He was accustomed to hear arguments on one side of a question attacked and dissected and answered by opponents with the greatest acuteness and pertinacity. He himself had to examine, weigh, and decide between rival arguments. The Athenian judicial system gave the same kind of training in another direction by its juries, on which every citizen was liable to be selected by lot to serve. The result was to create at Athens an extremely high level of general intelligence, such as cannot be looked for in a modern state. And it may well be that in the debates of the Assembly and the discussions of the courts of law Socrates first became aware of the necessity of sifting and examining plausible arguments.

Such, shortly, were the influences under which Socrates passed the first fifty years of his life. It is evident that they were most powerful and efficient as instruments of education, in the wider sense of that word. Very little evidence remains of the formal training which he received, or of the nature and extent of his positive knowledge: and the history of his intellectual development is practically a matter of pure conjecture. As a boy he received the usual Athenian liberal education in music and gymnastic,[1] an education, that is to say, mental and physical. He was fond of quoting from the existing Greek literature, and he seems to have been familiar with it, especially with Homer. He is represented by Xenophon as repeating Prodicus' fable of the choice of Heracles at length.[2] He says that he was in the habit of studying with his friends 'the treasures which the wise men of old have left us in their books:'[3] collections, that is, of the short and pithy sayings of the seven sages, such as 'know thyself'; a saying, it may be noticed, which lay at the root of his whole teaching. And he had some knowledge of mathematics, and of science, as it existed in those days. He understood something of astronomy and of

[1] *Crito*, 50 D., and for an account of such an education see Protagoras, 325 E. *seq.*, and *Rep.* ii. 376 E. to 412 A., an account of Plato's ideal reformed system of education.

[2] Xen. *Mem.* ii. 1. 21.

[3] Xen. *Mem.* i. 6. 14; cf. Protag. 343 A.

advanced geometry:[1] and he was acquainted with certain, at any rate, of the theories of his predecessors in philosophy, the Physical or Cosmical philosophers, such as Heraclitus and Parmenides, and, especially, with those of Anaxagoras.[2] But there is no trustworthy evidence which enables us to go beyond the bare fact that he had such knowledge. We cannot tell whether he ever studied Physical Philosophy seriously, or from whom, or how, or even, certainly, when, he learnt what he knew about it. It is perhaps most likely that his mathematical and scientific studies are to be assigned to the earlier period of his life. There is a passage in the *Phædo* in which he says (or rather is made to say) that in his youth he had had a passion for the study of Nature.[3] The historical value of this passage, however, which occurs in the philosophical or Platonic part of the dialogue, is very doubtful. Socrates is represented as passing on from the study of Nature to the doctrine of Ideas, a doctrine which was put forward for the first time by Plato after his death, and which he never heard of. The statement must be taken for what it is worth. The fact that Aristophanes in the *Clouds* (423 B.C.) represents Socrates as a natural philosopher, who teaches his pupils, among other things, astronomy and geometry, proves nothing. Aristophanes' misrepresenta-

[1] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 7. 3. 5. *Meno*, 82, *seq.*
[2] Xen. *Mem.* i. 1. 14. *Apol.* 26 D. *Phædo*, 96 A.
[3] *Phædo*, 96 A.

tions about Socrates are so gross that his unsupported testimony deserves no credit: and there is absolutely no evidence to confirm the statement that Socrates ever taught Natural Science. It is quite certain that latterly he refused to have anything to do with such speculations.[1] He admitted Natural Science only in so far as it is practically useful, in the way in which astronomy is useful to a sailor, or geometry to a land-surveyor.[2] Natural philosophers, he says, are like madmen: their conclusions are hopelessly contradictory, and their science unproductive, impossible, and impious; for the gods are not pleased with those who seek to discover what they do not wish to reveal. The time which is wasted on such subjects might be much more profitably employed in the pursuit of useful knowledge.[3]

All then that we can say of the first forty years of Socrates' life, consists of general statements like these. During these years there is no specific record of him. Between 432 B.C. and 429 B.C. he served as a common soldier at the siege of Potidæa, an Athenian dependency which had revolted, and surpassed every one in his powers of enduring hunger, thirst, and cold, and all the hardships of a severe Thracian winter. At this siege we hear of him for the first time in connection with Alcibiades, whose life he saved in a skirmish,

[1] *Apol.* 19 C. D. Xen. *Mem.* i. 1. 11.
[2] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 7. 2. 4.
[3] Xen. *Mem.* i. 1. 13. 15; iv. 7. 3. 5. 6.

and to whom he eagerly relinquished the prize of valour. In 431 B.C. the Peloponnesian War broke out, and in 424 B.C. the Athenians were disastrously defeated and routed by the Thebans at the battle of Delium. Socrates and Laches were among the few who did not yield to panic. They retreated together steadily, and the resolute bearing of Socrates was conspicuous to friend and foe alike. Had all the Athenians behaved as he did, says Laches, in the dialogue of that name, the defeat would have been a victory.[1] Socrates fought bravely a third time at the battle of Amphipolis [422 B.C.] against the Peloponnesian forces, in which the commanders on both sides, Cleon and Brasidas, were killed: but there is no record of his specific services on that occasion.

About the same time that Socrates was displaying conspicuous courage in the cause of Athens at Delium and Amphipolis, Aristophanes was holding him up to hatred, contempt, and ridicule in the comedy of the *Clouds*. The *Clouds* was first acted in 423 B.C., the year between the battles of Delium and Amphipolis, and was afterwards recast in the form in which we have it. It was a fierce and bitter attack on what Aristophanes, a staunch "*laudator temporis acti Se puero*," considered the corruption and degeneracy of the age. Since the middle of the Fifth Century B.C. a new intellectual movement, in which the Sophists were the most prominent figures, had set in. Men

[1] *Laches*, 181 B. *Sympos.* 219 E.

had begun to examine and to call in question the old-fashioned commonplaces of morality and religion. Independent thought and individual judgment were coming to be substituted for immemorial tradition and authority. Aristophanes hated the spirit of the age with his whole soul. It appeared to him to be impious and immoral. He looked back with unmixed regret to the simplicity of ancient manners, to the glories of Athens in the Persian wars, to the men of Marathon who obeyed orders without discussing them, and 'only knew how to call for their barley-cake, and sing yo-ho!'[1] The *Clouds* is his protest against the immorality of free thought and the Sophists. He chose Socrates for his central figure, chiefly, no doubt on account of Socrates' well-known and strange personal appearance. The grotesque ugliness, and flat nose, and prominent eyes, and Silenus-like face, and shabby dress, might be seen every day in the streets, and were familiar to every Athenian. Aristophanes cared little — probably he did not take the trouble to find out — that Socrates' whole life was spent in fighting against the Sophists. It was enough for him that Socrates did not accept the traditional beliefs,[2] and was a good centre-piece for a comedy. The account of the *Clouds* given in the *Apology*[3] is substantially correct. There is a caricature of a natural philosopher, and then a caricature of a Sophist. Roll the two together,

[1] Aristoph. *Frogs*, 1071. [2] Cf. *Euth.* 6. A.
[3] *Apol.* 18 B. C., 19 C.

and we have Aristophanes' picture of Socrates. Socrates is described as a miserable recluse, and is made to talk a great deal of very absurd and very amusing nonsense about 'Physics.' He announces that Zeus has been dethroned, and that Rotation reigns in his stead.

Δῖνος βασιλεύει τὸν Δί' ἐξεληλακώς.[1]

The new divinities are Air, which holds the earth suspended, and Ether, and the Clouds, and the Tongue—people always think 'that natural philosophers do not believe in the gods.'[2] He professes to have Belial's power to 'make the worse Appear the better reason;'[3] and with it he helps a debtor to swindle his creditors by means of the most paltry quibbles. Under his tuition the son learns to beat his father, and threatens to beat his mother; and justifies himself on the ground that it is merely a matter of convention that the father has the right of beating his son. In the concluding lines of the play the chorus say that Socrates' chief crime is that he has sinned against the gods with his eyes open. The Natural Philosopher was unpopular at Athens on religious grounds: he was associated with atheism. The Sophist was unpopular on moral grounds: he was supposed to corrupt young men, to make falsehood plausible, to be 'a clever fellow who could make other people clever too.'[4] The natural philosopher was not

[1] *Clouds*, 828. 380.
[2] *Apol.* 18 C.
[3] Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii. 113.
[4] *Euth.* 3 D.

a Sophist, and the Sophist was not a natural philosopher. Aristophanes mixes them up together, and ascribes the sins of both of them to Socrates. The *Clouds*, it is needless to say, is a gross and absurd libel from beginning to end:[1] but Aristophanes hit the popular conception. The charges which he made in 423 B.C. stuck to Socrates to the end of his life. They are exactly the charges made by popular prejudice, against which Socrates defends himself in the first ten chapters of the *Apology*, and which he says have been so long 'in the air.' He formulates them as follows: "Socrates is an evil-doer who busies himself with investigating things beneath the earth and in the sky, and who makes the worse appear the better reason, and who teaches others these same things."[2] If we allow for the exaggerations of a burlesque, the *Clouds* is not a bad com-

[1] Grote's argument (*Hist. of Greece*, vol. vi. p. 260) that if we reject Aristophanes' evidence as against Socrates, we must reject it as against Cleon, ignores an essential distinction between the two cases. Aristophanes, like the majority of his countrymen, was totally incapable of understanding or fathoming Socrates' character. It was utterly strange and unintelligible to him. But he could understand the character of an ordinary man of the world and politician, like Cleon, perfectly well. His portraits of both Socrates and Cleon are broad caricatures; and no absolute rule can be laid down for determining the historical value of a caricature. In each case the value depends on circumstances.

[2] *Apol.* 19 B. He was also accused at his trial of making children undutiful to their parents. Xen. *Mem.* i. 2. 49. Cf. *Clouds*, 1322 *seq.*

mentary on the beginning of the *Apology*. And it establishes a definite and important historical fact—namely, that as early as 423 B.C. Socrates' system of cross-examination had made him a marked man.

For sixteen years after the battle of Amphipolis we hear nothing of Socrates. The next events in his life, of which there is a specific record, are those narrated by himself in the twentieth chapter of the *Apology*. They illustrate, as he meant them to illustrate, his invincible moral courage. They show, as he intended that they should, that there was no power on earth, whether it were an angry popular assembly, or a murdering oligarchy, which could force him to do wrong. In 406 B.C. the Athenian fleet defeated the Lacedæmonians at the battle of Arginusæ, so called from some small islands off the south-east point of Lesbos. After the battle the Athenian commanders omitted to recover the bodies of their dead, and to save the living from off their disabled triremes. The Athenians at home, on hearing of this, were furious. The due performance of funeral rites was a very sacred duty with the Greeks;[1] and many citizens mourned for friends and relatives who had been left to drown. The commanders were immediately recalled, and an assembly was held in which they were accused of neglect of duty. They defended themselves by saying that they had ordered certain inferior officers

[1] Cf. the *Antigone* of Sophocles.

(amongst others, their accuser Theramenes) to perform the duty, but that a storm had come on which had rendered the performance impossible. The debate was adjourned, and it was resolved that the Senate should decide in what way the commanders should be tried. The Senate resolved that the Athenian people, having heard the accusation and the defence, should proceed to vote forthwith for the acquittal or condemnation of the eight commanders collectively. The resolution was grossly unjust, and it was illegal. It substituted a popular vote for a fair and formal trial. And it contravened one of the laws of Athens, which provided that at every trial a separate verdict should be found in the case of each person accused.

Socrates was at that time a member of the Senate, the only office that he ever filled. The Senate was composed of five hundred citizens, elected by lot, fifty from each of the ten tribes, and holding office for one year. The members of each tribe held the Prytany, that is, were responsible for the conduct of business, for thirty-five days at a time, and ten out of the fifty were proedri or presidents every seven days in succession. Every bill or motion was examined by the proedri before it was submitted to the Assembly, to see if it were in accordance with law: if it was not, it was quashed: one of the proedri presided over the Senate and the Assembly each day, and for one day only: he was called the Epistates:

it was his duty to put the question to the vote. In short, he was the Speaker.

These details are necessary for the understanding of the passage in the *Apology*. On the day on which it was proposed to take a collective vote on the acquittal or condemnation of the eight commanders, Socrates was Epistates. The proposal was, as we have seen, illegal: but the people were furious against the accused, and it was a very popular one. Some of the proedri opposed it before it was submitted to the Assembly, on the ground of its illegality; but they were silenced by threats and subsided. Socrates alone refused to give way. He would not put a question, which he knew to be illegal, to the vote. Threats of suspension and arrest, the clamour of an angry people, the fear of imprisonment or death, could not move him. 'I thought it my duty to face the danger out in the cause of law and justice, and not to be an accomplice in your unjust proposal.'[1] But his authority lasted only for a day; the proceedings were adjourned, a more pliant Epistates succeeded him, and the generals were condemned and executed.

Two years later Socrates again showed by his conduct that he would endure anything rather than do wrong. In 404 B.C. Athens was captured by the Lacedæmonian forces, and the long walls were thrown down.[2] The great

[1] *Apol.* 32 B. C. Cf. Mr. Riddell's note, *ad loc.* Xen. *Mem.* i. 1. 18.

[2] See the description at the beginning of Mr. Browning's *Aristophanes' Apology*.

Athenian democracy was destroyed, and an oligarchy of thirty set up in its place by Critias (who in former days had been much in Socrates' company) with the help of the Spartan general Lysander. The rule of the Thirty lasted for rather less than a year: in the spring of 403 B.C. the democracy was restored. The reign of Critias and his friends was a Reign of Terror. Political opponents and private enemies were murdered as a matter of course. So were respectable citizens, and wealthy citizens for the sake of their wealth. All kinds of men were used as assassins, for the oligarchs wished to implicate as many as possible in their crimes. With this object they sent for Socrates and four others to the Council Chamber, a building where formerly the Prytanies, and now they themselves, took their meals and sacrificed, and ordered them to bring one Leon over from Salamis to Athens, to be murdered. The other four feared to disobey an order, disobedience to which probably meant death. They went over to Salamis, and brought Leon back with them. Socrates disregarded the order and the danger, and went home. 'I showed,' he says, 'not by mere words, but by my actions, that I did not care a straw for death: but that I did care very much indeed about doing wrong.'[1] He had previously incurred the anger of Critias and the other oligarchs by publicly condemning their political murders in language which caused them to send for him, and forbid him to

[1] *Apol.* 32 D.

converse with young men as he was accustomed to do, and to threaten him with death.[1]

There are two events in the life of Socrates to which no date can be assigned. The first of them is his marriage with Xanthippe. By her he had three sons, Lamprocles, Sophroniscus, and Menexenus. The two latter are called 'children' in the *Apology*, which was delivered in 399 B.C., and the former *μειράκιον ἤδη*;[2] a phrase which implies that he was some fifteen years old. The name Xanthippe has come to mean a shrew. Her son Lamprocles found her bitter tongue and her violent temper intolerable, and his father told him that she meant all her harshness for his good, and read him a lecture on filial duty.[3] The parting between Socrates and Xanthippe, as described in the *Phædo*, is not marked by any great tenderness. His last day was spent, not with his wife, but with his friends, and she was not present at his death. No trustworthy details of his married life have been preserved; but there is a consensus of testimony by late authors that it was not happy. Indeed the strong probability is that he had no home life at all.

Again, no date can be assigned to the answer of the Delphic oracle, spoken of in the fifth chapter of the *Apology*. There it is said that Chærephon went to Delphi and asked if there was any man who was wiser than Socrates, and

[1] Xen. *Mem.* i. 2. 32, *seq.* [2] *Apol.* 34 D.
[3] Xen. *Mem.* ii. 2.

the priestess answered that there was no man. Socrates offers to prove the truth of his statement by the evidence of Chærephon's brother, Chærephon himself being dead. In the next chapter he represents the duty of testing the oracle as the motive of that unceasing examination of men which is described in the *Apology*, and which gained him so much hatred. He says that he thought himself bound to sift every one whom he met, in order that the truth of the oracle might be thoroughly tested and proved. There is no reason to doubt that the answer of the oracle was actually given; but, as Zeller observes, Socrates must have been a well-known and marked man before Chærephon could have asked his question, or the oracle have given such an answer. 'It may have done a similar service to Socrates as (*sic*) his doctor's degree did to Luther, assuring him of his inward call; but it had just as little to do with making him a philosophical reformer as the doctor's degree had with making Luther a religious reformer.'[1] The use which he makes of the oracle, therefore, must be regarded as 'a device of a semi-rhetorical character under cover of which he was enabled to avoid an avowal of the real purpose which had animated him in his tour of examination.'[2] His real purpose was not to test the truth of the Delphic oracle. It was to expose the hollowness of

[1] Zeller's *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, translated by the Rev. O. J. Reichel, 2d edition, p. 60, note 3.

[2] Riddell, p. xxiv.

what passed for knowledge, and to substitute, or rather, to lay the foundations of true and scientific knowledge. Such an explanation of his mission would scarcely have been understood, and it would certainly have offended the judges deeply. But he never hesitates or scruples to avow the original cause of his examination of men. He regarded it as a duty undertaken in obedience to the command of God. 'God has commanded me to examine men,' he says, 'in oracles, and in dreams, and in every way in which His will was ever declared to man.'[1] 'I cannot hold my peace, for that would be to disobey God.'[2] The *Apology* is full of such passages. With this belief he did not shrink from the unpopularity and hatred which a man, who exposes the ignorance of persons who imagine themselves to be wise, when they are not wise, is sure to incur. At what time he became convinced of the hollowness of what then commonly passed for knowledge, and began to examine men, and to make them give an account of their words, cannot be exactly determined, any more than the date of the oracle. We cannot tell to how many years of his life the account of it given in the *Apology* applies. All that is certain is that, as early as 423 B.C., twenty-four years before his death, he was a sufficiently conspicuous man for Aristophanes to select him as the type and representative of the new school, and to parody his famous *Elenchos*. There is, therefore, no reason to

[1] *Apol.* 33 C. [2] *Apol.* 37 E. See 29 D.; 30 B.

doubt that he must have begun to cross-examine men before 423 B.C. He had begun to examine himself as early as the siege of Potidæa (432 B.C.-429 B.C.).[1] But when he once set about this work he devoted himself to it entirely. He was a strange contrast to professional teachers like the Sophists. He took no pay: he had no classes: he taught no positive knowledge. But his whole life was spent in examining himself and others. He was 'the great cross-examiner.' He was ready to question and talk to any one who would listen. His life and conversation were absolutely public. He conversed now with men like Alcibiades, or Gorgias, or Protagoras, and then with a common mechanic. In the morning he was to be seen in the promenades and the gymnasia: when the Agora was filling, he was there: he was to be found wherever he thought that he should meet most people.[2] He scarcely ever went away from the city.[3] 'I am a lover of knowledge,' he says in the *Phædrus*,[4] 'and in the city I can learn from men, but the fields and the trees can teach me nothing.' He gave his life wholly and entirely to the service of God, neglecting his private affairs, until he came to be in very great poverty.[5] A mina of silver[6] is all that he can offer for his life at the trial. He formed no school, but there grew up round

[1] *Symp.* 220 C. See *post*, p. xxxii.
[2] Xen. *Mem.* i. 1. 10.
[3] *Crito*, 52 B.
[4] *Phædrus*, 230 D.
[5] *Apol.* 23 C.
[6] Equivalent then to about £4 : 1 : 3.

him a circle of admiring friends, united, not by any community of doctrines, but by love for their great master, with whom he seems not unfrequently to have had common meals.[1]

Plato has left a most striking description of Socrates in the *Symposium*,[2] put into the mouth of Alcibiades. I quote it almost at length from Shelley's translation, which, though not always correct, is graceful:—'I will begin the praise of Socrates by comparing him to a certain statue. Perhaps he will think that this statue is introduced for the sake of ridicule, but I assure you it is necessary for the illustration of truth. I assert, then, that Socrates is exactly like those Silenuses that sit in the sculptor's shops, and which are holding carved flutes or pipes, but which when divided in two are found to contain the images of the gods. I assert that Socrates is like the satyr Marsyas. That your form and appearance are like these satyrs, I think that even you will not venture to deny; and how like you are to them in all other things, now hear. Are you not scornful and petulant? If you deny this, I will bring witnesses. Are you not a piper, and far more wonderful a one than he? For Marsyas, and whoever now pipes the music that he taught, (for it was Marsyas who taught Olympus his music), enchants men through the power of the mouth.[3] For if any musician, be he skilful or

[1] Xen. *Mem.* iii. 14. 1. *seq.* [2] *Symp.* 215 A.

[3] The sentence as it stands in Shelley is quite unintelligible. I have corrected it.

not, awakens this music, it alone enables him to retain the minds of men, and from the divinity of its nature makes evident those who are in want of the gods and initiation: you differ only from Marsyas in this circumstance, that you effect without instruments, by mere words, all that he can do. For when we hear Pericles,[1] or any other accomplished orator, deliver a discourse, no one, as it were, cares anything about it. But when any one hears you, or even your words related by another, though ever so rude and unskilful a speaker, be that person a woman, man, or child, we are struck and retained, as it were, by the discourse clinging to our mind.

'If I was not afraid that I am a great deal too drunk, I would confirm to you by an oath the strange effects which I assure you I have suffered from his words, and suffer still; for when I hear him speak my heart leaps up far more than the hearts of those who celebrate the Corybantic mysteries; my tears are poured out as he talks, a thing I have often seen happen to many others besides myself. I have heard Pericles and other excellent orators, and have been pleased with their discourses, but I suffered nothing of this kind; nor was my soul ever on those occasions disturbed and filled with self-reproach, as if it were slavishly laid prostrate. But this Marsyas here has often affected me in the way I describe, until the life

[1] Pericles is not named in the original; he had been dead some years.

which I lived seemed hardly worth living. Do not deny it, Socrates; for I know well that if even now I chose to listen to you, I could not resist, but should again suffer the same effects. For, my friends, he forces me to confess that while I myself am still in need of many things, I neglect my own necessities and attend to those of the Athenians. I stop my ears, therefore, as from the Syrens, and flee away as fast as possible, that I may not sit down beside him, and grow old in listening to his talk. For this man has reduced me to feel the sentiment of shame, which I imagine no one would readily believe was in me. For I feel in his presence my incapacity of refuting what he says or of refusing to do that which he directs: but when I depart from him the glory which the multitude confers overwhelms me. I escape therefore and hide myself from him, and when I see him I am overwhelmed with humiliation, because I have neglected to do what I have confessed to him ought to be done: and often and often have I wished that he were no longer to be seen among men. But if that were to happen I well know that I should suffer far greater pain; so that where I can turn, or what I can do with this man I know not. All this have I and many others suffered from the pipings of this satyr.

'And observe how like he is to what I said, and what a wonderful power he possesses. Know that there is not one of you who is aware of the real nature of Socrates; but since

I have begun, I will make him plain to you. You observe how passionately Socrates affects the intimacy of those who are beautiful, and how ignorant he professes himself to be; appearances in themselves excessively Silenic. This, my friends, is the external form with which, like one of the sculptured Sileni, he has clothed himself; for if you open him you will find within admirable temperance and wisdom. For he cares not for mere beauty, but despises more than any one can imagine all external possessions, whether it be beauty, or wealth, or glory, or any other thing for which the multitude felicitates the possessor. He esteems these things, and us who honour them, as nothing, and lives among men, making all the objects of their admiration the playthings of his irony. But I know not if any one of you have ever seen the divine images which are within, when he has been opened, and is serious. I have seen them, and they are so supremely beautiful, so golden, so divine, and wonderful, that everything that Socrates commands surely ought to be obeyed, even like the voice of a god.

. . . .

'At one time we were fellow-soldiers, and had our mess together in the camp before Potidæa. Socrates there overcame not only me, but every one beside, in endurance of evils: when, as often happens in a campaign, we were reduced to few provisions, there were none who could sustain hunger like Socrates; and when

we had plenty, he alone seemed to enjoy our military fare. He never drank much willingly, but when he was compelled, he conquered all even in that to which he was least accustomed: and, what is most astonishing, no person ever saw Socrates drunk either then or at any other time. In the depth of winter (and the winters there are excessively rigid) he sustained calmly incredible hardships: and amongst other things, whilst the frost was intolerably severe, and no one went out of their tents, or if they went out, wrapped themselves up carefully, and put fleeces under their feet, and bound their legs with hairy skins, Socrates went out only with the same cloak on that he usually wore, and walked barefoot upon the ice: more easily, indeed, than those who had sandalled themselves so delicately: so that the soldiers thought that he did it to mock their want of fortitude. It would indeed be worth while to commemorate all that this brave man did and endured in that expedition. In one instance he was seen early in the morning, standing in one place, wrapt in meditation; and as he seemed unable to unravel the subject of his thoughts, he still continued to stand as inquiring and discussing within himself, and when noon came, the soldiers observed him, and said to one another —"Socrates has been standing there thinking, ever since the morning." At last some Ionians came to the spot, and having supped, as it was summer, they lay down to sleep in the cool: they observed that Socrates continued to stand

there the whole night until morning, and that, when the sun rose, he saluted it with a prayer and departed.

'I ought not to omit what Socrates is in battle. For in that battle [1] after which the generals decreed to me the prize of courage, Socrates alone of all men was the saviour of my life, standing by me when I had fallen and was wounded, and preserving both myself and my arms from the hands of the enemy. On that occasion I entreated the generals to decree the prize, as it was most due, to him. And this, O Socrates, you cannot deny, that when the generals, wishing to conciliate a person of my rank, desired to give me the prize, you were far more earnestly desirous than the generals that this glory should be attributed not to yourself, but me.

'But to see Socrates when our army was defeated and scattered in flight at Delium [2] was a spectacle worthy to behold. On that occasion I was among the cavalry, and he on foot, heavily armed. After the total rout of our troops, he and Laches retreated together; I came up by chance, and seeing them, bade them be of good cheer, for that I would not leave them. As I was on horseback, and therefore less occupied by a regard of my own situation, I could better observe than at Potidæa the beautiful spectacle exhibited by Socrates on this emergency. How superior was he to

[1] Sc. at Potidæa.

[2] Shelley writes 'Delius,' wrongly.

Laches in presence of mind and courage! Your representation of him on the stage, O Aristophanes, was not wholly unlike his real self on this occasion, for he walked and darted his regards around with a majestic composure, looking tranquilly both on his friends and enemies: so that it was evident to every one, even from afar, that whoever should venture to attack him would encounter a desperate resistance. He and his companions thus departed in safety: for those who are scattered in flight are pursued and killed, whilst men hesitate to touch those who exhibit such a countenance as that of Socrates even in defeat.

'Many other and most wonderful qualities might well be praised in Socrates, but such as these might singly be attributed to others. But that which is unparalleled in Socrates is that he is unlike and above comparison with all other men, whether those who have lived in ancient times, or those who exist now. For it may be conjectured that Brasidas and many others are such as was Achilles. Pericles deserves comparison with Nestor and Antenor; and other excellent persons of various times may, with probability, be drawn into comparison with each other. But to such a singular man as this, both himself and his discourses are so uncommon, no one, should he seek, would find a parallel among the present or past generations of mankind; unless they should say that he resembled those with whom I lately compared him, for assuredly he and his discourses are

like nothing but the Sileni and the Satyrs. At first I forgot to make you observe how like his discourses are to those Satyrs when they are opened, for if any one will listen to the talk of Socrates, it will appear to him at first extremely ridiculous: the phrases and expressions which he employs, fold round his exterior the skin, as it were, of a rude and wanton Satyr. He is always talking about great market-asses, and brass-founders, and leather-cutters, and skin-dressers; and this is his perpetual custom, so that any dull and unobservant person might easily laugh at his discourse. But if any one should see it opened, as it were, and get within the sense of his words, he would then find that they alone of all that enters into the mind of men to utter, had a profound and persuasive meaning, and that they were most divine; and that they presented to the mind innumerable images of every excellence, and that they tended towards objects of the highest moment, or rather towards all that he, who seeks the possession of what is supremely excellent and good, need regard as essential to the accomplishment of his ambition.

'These are the things, my friends, for which I praise Socrates.'

After that, Socrates, Aristophanes and Agathon sat the night out in conversation, till Socrates made the other two, who were very tired and sleepy, admit that a man who could write tragedy could write comedy, and that the foundations of the tragic and comic arts were

the same. Then Aristophanes and Agathon fell asleep in the early morning, and Socrates went away and washed himself at the Lyceum, 'and having spent the day there in his accustomed manner, went home in the evening.'

We have now reached the events recorded in our dialogues. In 399 B.C. Socrates was put on his trial for corrupting young men and for not believing in the gods of Athens; and on these charges he was found guilty and condemned to death. His death was delayed by a State religious ceremonial, and he lay in prison for thirty days.[1] His friends implored him to escape, which he might easily have done, but he refused to listen to them; and when the time came he cheerfully drank the poison and died. It is convenient to pause here for a little, before we go on to speak of these events in detail, in order to get some idea of Socrates as a thinker. With a very large number of questions concerning his philosophy we have nothing to do. But it is essential, if we are to understand these dialogues at all, that we should know something about certain points of it.

The pre-Socratic philosophers had been occupied almost exclusively with Physics and Metaphysics. They had tried to solve the problem of the Universe regarded as an undistinguishable whole. They had inquired into the nature of the Cosmos, and had sought to find some universal first principle, such as Air, Fire, or Water, to explain it. They had asked such

[1] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 8. 2.

questions as How do things come into being? How do they exist? Why do they decay?[1] But in the middle of the fifth century B.C. they had failed to satisfy men, and were falling into discredit. In a city like Athens, which had suddenly shot up into an imperial democracy, and which was full of such keen and varied intellectual activity, it was simply inevitable that ethical and political inquiries should take the place of those vague physical speculations. The questions which interested the Athenians of the time were questions relating to the individual and society, not to the Cosmos. Men had begun to dispute in an unscientific way about justice and injustice, right and wrong, the good and the expedient.[2] They had begun to ask, *What* is justice and right, and the good? *Why* is a thing said to be just, or right, or good? The pre-Socratic philosophers could give no answer to such questions. They had been conversant not with conduct, but with Physics and Metaphysics. The demand for ethical and political discussion (or disputation) was to some extent met by their successors, the Sophists, who were paid teachers (generally foreigners), and who professed to educate men for public and private life at Athens.[3] There

[1] See *Phædo*, 96 A. Of course it must be understood that the above is a broad statement, to which exceptions may be found.

[2] The pre-Socratic treatment of these questions may be illustrated by the speeches of Thucydides.

[3] See *Apol.* 19 E. *seq.*

is a good deal of controversy about their exact character and teaching, with which we are not concerned. We need not ask whether they were a sect or a profession; whether or no their teaching was immoral; how far they were the cause, and how far the effect of the new intellectual movement at Athens.[1] The point on which I wish to lay stress is that the morality which they were content to accept and teach was merely the mass of confused and inconsistent ideas about ethics and politics which were current at Athens. The whole of their ethical and political education was based on those often repeated and unexamined commonplaces, against which Socrates waged unceasing war. They were not scientific. They had no sense at all of the inherent vice of the popular thought and morality, and they did not aim at any reform. Their object was not to teach their pupils the truth, but to qualify them for social and political success. All that they did was to formulate popular ideas. There is an extremely remarkable passage in the *Republic*, in which Plato describes their teaching.[2] These mercenary adventurers, he says, who are called Sophists, teach in fact merely popular opinions, and call them wisdom: and he goes on to compare them with a man who has learnt by experience to understand the temper and wants of some huge

[1] See Mr. Sedgwick in the *Journal of Philology*, Nos. 8 and 9.

[2] *Rep.* vi. 493 A. *seq.* The whole passage is well worth reading.

and dangerous wild beast, and has found out when it is safe to approach it, and what sounds irritate it and soothe it, and what its various cries mean, and who, having acquired this knowledge, calls it wisdom, and systematises it into an art, and proceeds to teach it. What pleases the beast he calls right, and what displeases it he calls wrong; though he is utterly ignorant which of its desires and wants are, in fact, right and good, and which are the reverse. In exactly the same way, says Plato, the Sophist makes wisdom consist in understanding the fancies and temper of that 'many-headed beast,' the multitude, though he has not an argument that is not supremely ridiculous to show that what the multitude approves of is, in fact, right and good. In short the Sophists dealt, it is true, with ethical and political questions, but they dealt with them in the most superficial way. Often enough they were contemptible charlatans.

At this point, some time after the Sophists had begun to educate men, and when the new intellectual and critical movement was in full swing, came Socrates. Like the Sophists he dealt with ethical and political questions: to such questions (*τὰ ἀνθρώπεια*) he strictly and exclusively confined himself. 'He conversed,' says Xenophon,[1] 'only about matters relating to men. He was always inquiring What is piety? What is impiety? What is honourable? What is base? What is justice? What is injustice? What is temperance? What

[1] Xen. *Mem.* i. 1. 16; cf. *Rep.* ii. 367 D. E.

is madness? What is courage? What is cowardice? What is a state? What is a statesman? What is government? What makes a man fit to govern? and so on; and he used to say that those who could answer such questions were good men, and that those who could not, were no better than slaves.' So, in the *Laches* of Plato, he asks, What is courage? In the *Charmides*, What is temperance? In the first of our dialogues, the *Euthyphron*, What are holiness and piety? In the *Lysis*, What is friendship? The difference between Socrates and preceding philosophers, in regard to the subject matter of their respective philosophies, is complete. They were occupied with Nature: he was occupied with man. And the difference between him and the Sophists, in regard to method, and to the point of view from which they respectively dealt with ethical and political questions, is not less complete. His object was to reform what they were content simply to formulate. He was thoroughly convinced of the inherent vice and hollowness of what passed for knowledge at that time. In the *Apology* we shall constantly hear of men who thought themselves wise, though they were not wise; who fancied that they knew what they did not know. They used general terms which implied classification. They said that this or that act was just or unjust, right or wrong. They were ready on every occasion to state propositions about man and society with unhesitating confidence. The meaning of such common words as justice, piety,

democracy, government, seemed so familiar, that it never for a moment occurred to them to doubt whether they knew what 'justice,' or 'piety,' or 'democracy,' or 'government' exactly meant. But in fact they had never taken the trouble to analyse and make clear to themselves the meaning of their words. They had been content 'to feel and affirm.' General words had come to comprehend in their meaning a very complex multitude of vague and ill-assorted attributes, and to represent in the minds of those who used them nothing more than a floating collection of confused and indefinite ideas.[1] It is a fact, which it is not quite easy for us to realise, that Socrates was practically the first man to frame a definition. 'Two things,' says Aristotle,[2] 'may fairly be ascribed to Socrates, namely Induction, and the Definition of general Terms.' Until his time the meaning of words, which were used every day in connection with the commonest, and the greatest and the gravest duties of life, had never once been tested, revised, examined. It had grown up gradually and unconsciously, never distinct and clearly defined. It was the creation of years of sentiment, poetry, authority, and tradition: it had never been corrected or analysed by reason. There is a sentence in Bacon which describes very felicitously the intellectual condition of the Athenians of that time:—'Itaque ratio illa humana quam habe-

[1] See J. S. Mill's *Logic*, Bk. iv., ch. 4.
[2] Arist. *Metaph.* xiii. 4, 6.

mus, ex multâ fide, et multo etiam casu, necnon ex puerilibus quas primo hausimus notionibus, farrago quædam est et congeries.'[1] 'This human reason of ours is a confused multitude and mixture of ideas, made up, very largely by accident, of much credulity and of the opinions which we inherited long ago in our childhood.' Such inaccurate use of language led, as it was bound to lead, to inaccurate and loose reasoning. 'Every (process of reasoning) consists of propositions, and propositions consist of words which are the symbols of notions; and therefore if our notions are confused and badly abstracted from things, there is no stability in the structure which is built upon them.'[2] As Socrates puts it in the *Phædo*,[3] 'to use words wrongly and indefinitely is not merely an error in itself: it also creates an evil in the soul.' That is to say, it not only makes exact thought, and therefore knowledge, impossible: it also creates careless and slovenly habits of mind. And this inaccurate use of language, and the consequent intellectual confusion, were not confined to any one class at Athens. They were almost universal. It was not merely among the noted men with a great reputation that Socrates found the 'conceit of knowledge' without the reality. The poets could not explain their own poems, and further, because they were famous as poets, they claimed to understand other matters of

[1] Bacon, *Nov. Org.* i. 97.

[2] Bacon, *Nov. Org.* i. 14. I have substituted 'process of reasoning' for 'syllogism.'

[3] *Phædo*, 115 E.

which they were, in fact, profoundly ignorant. The skilled artizans were able, it is true, to give an account, each of the rules of his own art; but they too, like the poets, claimed to possess knowledge in matters of the greatest importance (*i.e.* questions affecting man and society), which they did not possess, on account of their technical skill: and 'this fault of theirs,' says Socrates,[1] 'threw their real wisdom into the shade.' And men of all classes were profoundly ignorant that they were ignorant. They did not understand defining words. It appeared to them to be contemptible hair-splitting. 'What is piety?' asks Socrates of Euthyphron, a man who had thought a great deal about religious questions. 'Piety,' replies Euthyphron, 'means acting as I am acting.'[2] He had never analysed or defined his words. He did not in the least understand what definition meant, or the necessity for it. Such and such an act was pious; but he could not justify his proposition by bringing it under the universal proposition, the definition of piety, or tell *why* his act was pious. Cross-examination makes him contradict himself over and over again. The simplest way of comprehending the confusion of thought and language which Socrates found on every side, is to read the *Euthyphron*. And if we examine ourselves I think that we shall find that even we, like Euthyphron, not uncommonly use general terms of the greatest importance without affixing a very definite meaning to them.

[1] *Apol.* 22 D. [2] *Euth.* 5 A. D.

In our times the Press has become the public instructor. We have only to take up a newspaper, and read a religious, or political, or ethical debate or argument, to have a very fair chance of seeing repeated examples of general and abstract terms used in the loosest and vaguest way possible. Such words as 'patriotism,' 'superstition,' 'justice,' 'right,' 'wrong,' 'honour,' are not uncommonly used by us, in public, and in private, with no more distinct or definite a meaning given to them, than that which Euthyphron gave to 'piety.'

On this basis rested Athenian opinion. We are now in a position to understand so much of Socrates' philosophical reforms as concerns us. He was filled with the most intense conviction of the supreme and overwhelming importance of truth: of the paramount duty of doing right, because it is right, on every occasion, be the consequences what they may. 'My friend,' he says, in his defence, to a supposed objector, 'if you think that a man of any worth at all ought, when he acts, to take into account the risk of death, or that he ought to think of anything but whether he is doing right or wrong, you make a mistake.'[1] 'I spend my whole time in going about, persuading you all, both old and young, to give your first and chiefest care to the perfection of your souls, and, not till you have done that to care for your bodies or your wealth: and telling you that virtue does not come from wealth, but

[1] *Apol.* 28 B.

that wealth, and every good thing which men have, comes from virtue.'[1] 'We are guided by reason,' is his answer when Crito was imploring him to escape from prison, after he had been condemned to death, 'and reason shows us that the only question which we have to consider is, Shall I be doing right, or shall I be doing wrong, if I escape? And if we find that I should be doing wrong, then we must not take any account of death, or of any other evil which may be the consequence of staying here, but only of doing wrong.'[2] That

[1] *Apol.* 30 A. B.

[2] Crito, 48 C. I am speaking only of the Platonic Socrates, and primarily of the Socrates of these dialogues. The Socrates of Xenophon takes generally a very different view of morality. To him the measure of the goodness or badness of an act is almost always its expediency or inexpediency. He is made to say that the good and the useful are the same thing (*Mem.* iv. 6. 8. 9). Virtue is therefore the knowledge of consequences. A similar doctrine is put into Socrates' mouth by Plato (*Protag.* 333 D., 358 B.), and Socrates uses it in his examination of Meletus in the *Apology* (25 C. D.); though I do not think that any stress can be laid on that passage, for the whole argument there (as is largely the case also in the *Protagoras*) is simply dialectical. It is of course inconsistent to say that a man should do right because right is right, and that he should do right because it is expedient to do right. Zeller thinks that Socrates was in fact inconsistent (p. 154, *seq.*) Grote accepts the account of Xenophon, 'the best witness about his master' (*History of Greece*, vol. viii., p. 262, note 1). He thinks also that the *Apology* 'may reasonably be taken as a reproduction by Plato of what Socrates actually said to the Dikasts on his trial' (p. 214, note 2). These two statements are inconsistent.

such a man should feel the deepest dissatisfaction with what passed for thought and morality at Athens, was simply inevitable. 'The current opinions drawn from men's practical exigencies, imperfect observation, and debased morality, were no sounder than their sources.' And with this dissatisfaction was joined a conviction that God had given him a duty to reform 'this mass of error and conventionality, which meanwhile the Sophists were accepting as the material of their system:'[1] a duty from which he never shrank, although he knew that it might, as in fact it did, cost him his life. In order to comprehend the *Euthyphron*, *Apology*, and *Crito*, we must ask and answer two questions. First, What was Socrates' conception of reform? Secondly, What was his method?

1. The principle of Socrates' reform may be stated in a single sentence. It was 'to reconstruct human opinion on a basis of "reasoned truth."' Conduct which proceeded from emotion, enthusiasm, impulse, habit, and not from reason, he would not allow to be virtuous. His whole teaching rested on the paradox that 'virtue is knowledge.'[2] This

[1] These sentences are quoted from Mr. Riddell's most striking note on the words ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ ('an unexamined life is not worth living'), *Apol.* 38 A.

[2] Xen. *Mem.* iii. 9. 5; Arist. *Ethics*, vi. 13; see Zeller, p. 106, *seq.* 'Virtue' is a very inadequate representative of ἀρετὴ, but I know of no other. By the

is the leading idea of his attempt to reform morality, and it must always be borne in mind. It is perpetually alluded to in our dialogues. He describes his ceaseless cross-examination of men as undertaken with the object of testing their knowledge, and of preaching the supreme importance of virtue, indifferently.[1] And conversely, if Virtue is Knowledge, Vice is Ignorance, and consequently involuntary. He always assumes that the crime of corrupting young men of which he was accused was caused, if he had committed it, not by moral depravity, in the ordinary sense of the word, but by ignorance.[2] 'You are a liar, Meletus, and you know it,' he retorts, on being told that he was in the habit of corrupting the youth intentionally; 'either I do not corrupt young men at all, or I corrupt them unintentionally, and by reason of my ignorance. As soon as I *know* that I am committing a crime, of course I shall cease from committing it.'[3] A man who knows what is right, must always do right: a man who does not know what is right, cannot do right. 'We needs must love the highest when we see it.' Knowledge is not a part, it is not even an indispensable condition of virtue. It *is* virtue. The two things are the

ἀρετὴ of a man, Socrates meant the excellence and perfection of a man as such. *Protag.* 325 A. Cf. Arnold's note to *Thucydides*, ii. 40. 6.

[1] *Apol.* 21 D., 22 E., 29 E. *seq.*, 31 B.

[2] *Euth.* 5 A., 16 A.

[3] *Apol.* 25 E.

same. We draw a distinction between Knowledge and Wisdom. The former

> 'is earthly, of the mind,
> But Wisdom, heavenly, of the soul.' [1]

But Socrates drew no distinction between them. To him they were identical. It is needless to point out that this doctrine, which takes no account of that most essential side of virtue which is non-intellectual, is defective, in that it puts a part for the whole. But from this doctrine Socrates started. He wished to reform morality from the intellectual side. Above all things a preacher of 'Virtue,' he devoted his life to a search after knowledge. Knowledge to him was the same as morality.

2. In order to understand the method of Socrates' reform, it is necessary to recall the fact that he found himself confronted with a general absence, not of knowledge only, but of the very idea of knowledge. The result of his constant examination and sifting of men was to prove that his contemporaries of every class, and above all those of them who were most satisfied with themselves, and whose reputation for wisdom was highest, were generally in a state of that 'shameful ignorance which consists in thinking that we know what we do not know.'[2] And the gravest symptom of this state of things was that the Athenians were perfectly well satisfied with it. It never crossed their minds for a moment to doubt the complete adequacy of

[1] Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, cxiv. [2] *Apol.* 29 B

what they considered to be knowledge, though in fact it was merely a hollow sham. Socrates' first object then was to clear the ground, to get rid of men's ignorance of their ignorance, to reveal to them their actual short-coming. Like Bacon, he set himself the task of 'throwing entirely aside received theories and conceptions, and of applying his mind, so cleansed, afresh to facts.'[1] The first step in his method was destructive. It was to convict and convince men of their ignorance by means of his wonderful cross-examination. He was for ever bringing to the test the current commonplaces, the unexpressed popular judgments about life, which were never examined or revised, and the truth of which was taken for granted by every one. He spent his days in talking to any one who would talk to him. A man in the course of conversation used a general or abstract term, such as 'courage,' 'justice,' 'the state.' Socrates asked for a definition of it. The other, never doubting that he knew all about it, gave an answer at once. The word seemed familiar enough to him: he constantly used it, though he had never taken the trouble to ask himself what it exactly meant. Then Socrates proceeded to test the definition offered him, by applying it to particular cases, by putting questions about it, by analysing it.[2] He probably found without much difficulty that it was defective: either

[1] Bacon, *Nov. Org.* i. 97.

[2] See Bacon, *Nov. Org.* i. 105.

too narrow, or too broad, or contradictory of some other general proposition which had been laid down. Then the respondent amended his definition: but a fresh series of similar questions soon led him into hopeless difficulties; and he was forced at last to confess, or at least to feel, that he was ignorant where he had thought that he was wise, that he had nothing like clear knowledge of what the word in question really and exactly meant. The *Euthyphron* is a perfect specimen of the Socratic examination or *elenchos*. Let me give another very good example from Xenophon. Euthydemus, who is taking great pains to qualify himself for political life, has no doubt that justice is an essential attribute of a good citizen. He scorns the idea that he does not know what justice and injustice are, when he can see so many examples of them every day. It is unjust to lie, to deceive, to rob, to do harm, to enslave. But, objects Socrates, it is not unjust to deceive, or to enslave, or to injure your enemies. Euthydemus then says that it is unjust to treat your friends so. It is just to deal thus with your enemies. Well, rejoins Socrates, is a general who inspirits his army with a lie, or a father who gets his son to take necessary medicine by means of a lie, or a man who takes away a sword from his friend who is attempting to commit suicide in a fit of insanity, unjust? Euthydemus admits that such acts are just, and wishes to alter the definition. Then does injustice mean deceiving one's friends for their

harm? 'Indeed, Socrates,' replies Euthydemus, 'I no longer believe in my answers: everything seems to me different from what it used to seem' (cf. *Euth.* 11 B.) A further question, namely, Are you unjust if you injure your friends unintentionally? is discussed with a similar result, which Socrates attributes to the fact that Euthydemus perhaps has never considered these points, because they seemed so familiar to him (*διὰ τὸ σφόδρα πιστέυειν εἰδέναι*). Then Socrates asks him what a democracy is (of course Euthydemus knows that, for he is going to lead a political life in a democracy). Euthydemus replies that democracy means government by the people, *i.e.* by the poor. He defines the poor as those who have not enough, and the rich as those who have more than enough. 'Enough,' it is pointed out, is a relative term. His definition would include tyrants among the poor, and many men with quite small means among the rich. At this point Euthydemus who had began the discussion with complete self-complacency, goes away greatly dejected. 'Socrates makes me acknowledge my own worthlessness. I had best be silent, for it seems that I know nothing at all.'[1] To produce this painful and unexpected consciousness of ignorance in the minds of men who thought that they were wise, when they were not wise, and who were

[1] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 2. 11.-39. Cf. *Meno*, 80 A., where Socrates is compared to the torpedo fish which gives a shock to whoever touches it.

perfectly well satisfied with their intellectual condition, was the first object of the Socratic cross-examination. Such consciousness of ignorance was the first and a long step towards knowledge. A man who had reached that state had become at any rate ready to begin to learn. And Socrates was able to bring every one with whom he conversed into that state.[1] Very many who were treated so took deep offence: among others, his accuser Anytus.[2] Such persons he called lazy and stupid. Others, like Euthydemus, spent all their time afterwards in his company, and were then no longer perplexed by puzzling questions, but encouraged.[3]

It is this object of clearing the ground, of producing consciousness of ignorance, that Plato dwells on in his portrait of Socrates. He lays great stress on the negative and destructive side of the Socratic philosophy: but he says scarcely anything of its constructive side. It may well be doubted whether there was very much to say; whether Socrates did in fact attempt to create any system of real knowledge to take the place of the sham knowledge which he found existing. Xenophon, it is true, represents him as framing a certain number of definitions, on the basis of generally admitted facts (*τὰ μάλιστα ὁμολογούμενα*).[4] 'Piety,' for instance, is defined as 'knowledge of what is due to the gods;'

[1] Xen. *Mem.* i. 2. 14.
[2] *Meno*, 94 E.; cf. *Apol.* 21 D.
[3] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 2. 40.
[4] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 6. 15.

'justice' as 'knowledge of what is due to men.'[1] But I think that Socrates would have said that these definitions were tentative and provisional only, and designed rather as illustrations of a method, than as instalments of knowledge. By knowledge he meant a system of 'reasoned truth' based on a thorough fresh observation and examination of particulars. He would not have been content to take these 'generally admitted facts' as the basis of it. He would have insisted on putting them to the test. And certainly, whatever may be the meaning and value of Xenophon's testimony, nothing can be more emphatic than the way in which the Socrates of the *Apology* repeatedly says that he knows nothing at all.[2] 'I was never any man's teacher. . . . I have never taught, and I have never professed to teach any man any knowledge,'[3] is his answer to the charge that men like Critias and Alcibiades, political criminals of the deepest dye in the eyes of the democracy, had been his pupils. His object was to impart, not any positive system, but a frame of mind: to make men conscious of their ignorance, and of their need of enlightenment. His wisdom was merely 'that wisdom which he believed was (in the then state of things) possible to man.'[4] In other words, he was conscious of his own ignorance: and, secondly, he possessed a standard or ideal of knowledge,

[1] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 6. 4. 6. Cf. *Euth.* 12 E.
[2] *Apol.* 21 B. D.; 23 B. [3] *Apol.* 33 A.
[4] *Apol.* 20 D.

and a conception of the method of attaining it. But he possessed no connected system of knowledge: he was only conscious, and he was the first man to be conscious of the necessity of it. We may speak of him as a philosopher, for he does so himself. But we must remember that philosophy in his mouth does not mean the possession of wisdom, but only, and strictly, the love of, the search for, wisdom.[1] The idea of knowledge was to him still a deep and unfathomable problem, of the most supreme importance, but which he could not solve. And this will enable us to understand better the meaning of his famous 'irony.' 'Here is a piece of Socrates' well-known irony,' cries Thrasymachus, in the *Republic*,[2] 'I knew all the time that you would refuse to answer, and feign ignorance, and do anything sooner than answer a plain question.' It seems to me that Socrates' 'well-known irony' was of more than one kind. His professions of his own ignorance are wholly sincere. They are not meant to make the conversation amusing, and the discomfiture of his adversary more complete. He never wavered in his belief that knowledge was ultimately attainable; but he knew that he knew nothing himself, and in that his knowledge consisted. What Thrasymachus calls his irony, is not irony proper. The ignorance is not feigned but real. It is in his treatment of vain and ignorant and self-satisfied sciolists, like Euthyphron, that true irony, which is accompanied with the consciousness

[1] Cf. *Rep.* ii. 376 B. [2] *Rep.* i. 337 A.

of superiority, seems to me to come into play. It is possible, though it is in the last degree unlikely, that Socrates really hoped at the beginning of the dialogue to find out from Euthyphron what piety was; that the respect which he showed to Euthyphron was real. But it is plain that the respect which he shows to Euthyphron in the last sentences of the dialogue, is wholly feigned and ironical. Euthyphron had been proved to be utterly ignorant of what he had been confident that he thoroughly understood. He was much too deeply offended to acknowledge, or even to be conscious of his ignorance; and he had not the slightest idea of what knowledge really was. Socrates was ignorant too: but he knew that he was ignorant, and he had the idea of knowledge. If he was respectful towards Euthyphron then, the respect was feigned and ironical, for it was accompanied with a consciousness of superiority.

We have now got, I hope, a sufficient view of Socrates' philosophy, so far as it concerns us. Its defects lie on the surface, and are too obvious to need explanation. He was, in fact, the discoverer of the idea of scientific knowledge, and he not unnaturally exaggerated the value of his discovery. It is evidently a mistake and an exaggeration to call a man ignorant unless he not only knows, but can also give an account of what he knows.[1] There is such a thing as 'implicit' knowledge:[2] before Socrates' time

[1] *Phædo*, 76 B.

[2] Johnson said that 'the greatest part of our know-

there was no other kind. Not less evidently is it a mistake to say that Virtue is Knowledge. Knowledge, though an essential part, is certainly very far indeed from being the whole of Virtue. And a theory which leads to such sarcastic comments on poets as Socrates indulges in,[1] which would try poetry by a purely intellectual standard, must, on the face of it, be defective. But, even when allowance has been made for these defects and mistakes, it would be hard to exaggerate the value and originality of his teaching. We have some difficulty in grasping its vast importance. We have entered into the fruit of his labours. What was a paradox to the Athenians is a commonplace to us. To them the simple principles which he laid down seemed generally either absurd or immoral: to us they are (in theory) scarcely more than household words. He was, in fact, the first man who conceived the possibility of moral and political science, and of logic. In that, and not in the creation of any positive system of philosophy, his philosophical greatness consists. If Aristotle is 'the Master of those who know,' assuredly Socrates is their father, and 'the author of their being.' His theory of definitions was the necessary first step towards the existence of any scientific thought. Our temptation is to undervalue his cross-examination. In reading such a dialogue as the *Euthyphron*, we get bored and irritated by his method

ledge is implicit faith.'—Boswell's *Life*, vol. 3, p. 304 (Napier's Edition, 1884).

[1] *Apol.* 22 B. C.

of argument, and it sometimes almost drives us to sympathise with the wretched sciolist. Coleridge talks of 'a man who would pull you up at every turn for a definition, which is like setting up perpetual turnpikes along the road to truth.'[1] But it must be always remembered, first, that the Socratic cross-examination was originally addressed to men who did not know what definition meant: that it was a necessary stage in the development of human thought; and secondly, that, even to us, it is of the greatest importance to make sometimes 'a return upon ourselves,' and to ask ourselves the exact meaning of our stock thoughts and phrases.

We may now turn to our dialogues, the *Euthyphron*, *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phædo*, which describe the trial, the imprisonment, and the death of Socrates. The first of them, however, the *Euthyphron*, has only an indirect bearing on these events. Socrates is going to be tried for impiety, and before the trial begins, he wishes to show that the current commonplaces about piety and impiety will not bear testing. The scene is laid in the porch of the King Archon, an official before whom indictments for impiety and the plea of the accused were laid and sworn to, matters of religion being his especial care. Here Socrates and Euthyphron meet, Socrates having just been indicted, and Euthyphron being engaged in indicting his father for the murder of a labouring man. Euthyphron is supremely contemptuous of his

[1] See Carew Hazlitt's *Life of Hazlitt*, vol. i. p. 48.

friends and relatives, who say that he is acting impiously. On the contrary, he says, his act is a holy and pious one. To do otherwise would be impious. He himself, he is confident, knows all about religion, and piety, and impiety: he has made them his special study. Socrates is anxious to be told what piety is, that he may have something to say to his accusers. Euthyphron answers at once without hesitation 'Piety is acting as I am acting now. It means punishing the evil-doer, even though he be your own father, just as Zeus is said to have punished his father Cronos for a crime.' Socrates remarks that he cannot bring himself to believe those horrible stories about Zeus and the other gods, and he points out that Euthyphron has not answered his question. He does not want a particular example of piety. He wishes to know what piety itself is, what that is which makes all pious actions pious. Euthyphron has a little difficulty at first in understanding Socrates' meaning. Then he gives as his definition, 'Piety is that which is pleasing to the gods.' But he has also said that the mythological tales about the quarrels of the gods are true: and Socrates makes him admit that if the gods quarrel, it is about questions of right and wrong and the like, and that some of them will think a thing right which others of them will think wrong. The same thing therefore is pleasing to the gods and displeasing to the gods, and Euthyphron's definition will not stand. Euthyphron then changes his ground and says, 'Piety

is that which is pleasing to all the gods.' Socrates demolishes this definition by pointing out that what is pleasing to the gods 'is of a sort to be loved by them, because they love it;' whereas piety 'is loved by them, because it is of a sort to be loved.' By this time the cross-examination has thoroughly confused Euthyphron, and he scarcely understands the suggestion that piety is a part of justice. After a good deal of prompting he defines piety as 'that part of justice which has to do with the care or attention which we owe to the gods (cf. Xen. *Mem.* iv. 6. 4, 'Piety is the knowledge of what is due to the gods'). Socrates elicits from him with some trouble that by 'attention' he means 'service,' and then drives him to admit that piety is 'a science of prayer and sacrifice,' or, as Socrates puts it, 'an art of traffic between gods and men.' We give the gods honour and homage, in short what is acceptable to them. Nothing, thinks Euthyphron, is dearer to them than piety. Indeed piety means 'what is dear to them:' which is in fact, as Socrates points out, the very definition which was rejected earlier in the dialogue. At this point Euthyphron, who has passed from a state of patronising self-complacency to one of, first, puzzled confusion, and, then, of deeply offended pride, finds it convenient to remember that he is late for an engagement and must be off. The dialogue ends with an ironical appeal by Socrates for information about the real nature of piety. 'If any man knows what it is, it is you."

The *Euthyphron* is a perfect example of Socrates' method of cross-examination, and it is not necessary to add anything to what has already been said on that subject. We cannot tell whether the conversation recorded in this dialogue ever actually took place. Socrates' dislike of the mythological tales about the crimes of the gods should be noticed. It is, he says, one of the causes of his unpopularity. Another cause is that he has the reputation of being 'a man who makes other people clever,' *i.e.* a Sophist. It must also be noticed that the real question which he discusses is not whether Euthyphron's action is justifiable or no, but whether Euthyphron can justify it.

We come now to the trial and the defence of Socrates. He was indicted in 399 B.C. before an ordinary Athenian criminal tribunal for not believing in the gods of Athens and for corrupting young men. We must clear our minds of all ideas of an English criminal trial, if we are to realise at all the kind of court before which he was tried. It consisted probably of 501 dicasts or jurymen, who were a very animated audience, and were wont to express openly their approbation or disapprobation of the arguments addressed to them. Aristophanes represents them in one of his plays[1] as shouting at an unpopular speaker the Greek equivalent of 'sit down! sit down!' *κατάβα, κατάβα.* Socrates' appeals for a quiet hearing are addressed to them, not to the general audi-

[1] *Vesp.* 979.

ence. There was no presiding judge. The indictment was preferred by an obscure young poet named Meletus, backed up by Lycon, a rhetorician of whom nothing more is known, and by Anytus, the real mover in the matter. He was a leather seller by trade and an ardent politician, whose zeal and sufferings in the cause of the democracy, at the time of the oligarchy of the Thirty, had gained him much reputation and influence with the people. After the restoration of 403 B.C. he was a man of great political weight in Athens. All three accusers therefore belonged to classes which Socrates had offended by his unceasing censure of men, who could give no account of the principles of their profession. We meet with Anytus again in the *Meno*, in which dialogue he displays an intense hatred and scorn for the Sophists. 'I trust that no connection or relative or friend of mine, whether citizen or foreigner, will ever be so mad as to allow them to ruin him.' And he finally loses his temper at some implied criticisms of Socrates on the unsatisfactory nature of the ordinary Athenian education, which did not, or could not, teach virtue, and goes away with an ominous threat. 'Socrates, I think that you speak evil of men too lightly. I advise you to be careful. In any city it is probably easier to do people harm than to do them good, and it is certainly so in Athens, as I suppose you know yourself.'[1] The next time that we hear of Anytus is as one of Socrates' accusers. The form of the indictment

[1] *Meno*, 91 B., 94 E.

was as follows: 'Meletus the son of Meletus, of the deme Pitthis, on his oath brings the following accusation against Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus, of the deme Alopece. Socrates commits a crime by not believing in the gods of the city, and by introducing other new divinities. He also commits a crime by corrupting the youth. Penalty, Death.'[1] Meletus, in fact, merely formulates the attack made on Socrates by Aristophanes in the *Clouds*. The charge of atheism and of worshipping strange gods was a stock accusation against the Physical Philosophers.[2] The charge of immorality, of corrupting the youth, was a stock accusation against the Sophists. Meletus' indictment contains no specific charge against Socrates as an individual.

A few words are necessary to explain the procedure at the trial. The time assigned to it was divided into three equal lengths. In the first the three accusers made their speeches: with this we are not concerned. The second was occupied by the speeches of the accused (and sometimes of his friends), that is, by the first twenty-four chapters of the *Apology*. Then the judges voted and found their verdict. The third length opened with the speech of the prosecutor advocating the penalty which he proposed—in this case, death. The accused

[1] See *Apol.* 24 B.

[2] *Apol.* 18 C., 23 D. A few years earlier a decree, aimed at Anaxagoras, was passed, at the instance of one Diopeithes, making it criminal to deny religion or to teach meteorology.—Plut. *Pericles*, xxxii.

was at liberty to propose a lighter alternative penalty, and he could then make a second speech in support of his proposal. He might at the same time bring forward his wife and children, and so appeal to the pity of the Court. To this stage of the proceedings belong chapters xxv.-xxviii. inclusive, of the *Apology*. Then the judges had to decide between the two penalties submitted to them, of which they had to choose one. If they voted for death, the condemned man was led away to prison by the officers of the Eleven: With chapter xxviii. the trial ends: we cannot be certain that Socrates was ever actually allowed to make such an address as is contained in the closing chapters of the *Apology*. It is at least doubtful whether the Athenians, who had just condemned a man to death that they might no longer be made to give an account of their lives, would endure to hear him denouncing judgment against them for their sins, and prophesying the punishment which awaited them. Finally, we must remember that at certain points of his defence, strictly so called, Socrates must be supposed to call witnesses.[1]

The first part of the *Apology* begins with a short introduction. Then Socrates proceeds to divide his accusers into two sets. First there are those who have been accusing him untruly now for many years, among them his old enemy Aristophanes; then there are Meletus and his companions. He will answer his 'first accusers' first. They have accused him of being

[1] *E.g. Apol.* 21 A.; 32 E.

at once a wicked sophist and a natural philosopher. He distinguishes these characters, and points out that it is untrue to say that he is either one or the other. He is unpopular because he has taken on himself the duty of examining men, in consequence of a certain answer given by the Delphic oracle, 'that he was the wisest of men.' He describes the examination of men which he undertook to test the truth of the oracle, which has gained him much hatred: men do not like to be proved ignorant when they think themselves wise. They call him a sophist and every kind of bad name besides, because he exposes their pretence of knowledge. Then he turns to his present accusers, Meletus, Anytus, and Lycon. Meletus is cross-examined and easily made to contradict himself: he is an infant in Socrates' hands, who treats him very contemptuously, answering a fool according to his folly. But some one may ask, is it worth while to risk death for the sake of such a life as you are leading? Socrates replies that he did not desert the post which human generals assigned him; shall he desert the post at which God has set him? He will not do that; and therefore he will not accept an acquittal conditional on abstaining from an examination of men. The Athenians should not be angry with him; rather they should thank God for sending him to them to rouse them, as a gadfly—to use a quaint simile—rouses a noble but sluggish steed. If they put him to death, they will not easily find a successor to him. His whole life

is devoted to their service, though he is not a public man. He would have been put to death years ago if he had engaged in politics, for there is much injustice in every city, which he would oppose by every means in his power. His actions, when the ten generals were condemned, and under the oligarchy, prove that. But as a private man he has striven for justice all his life, and his conversation has been open before all. If young men have been corrupted by him, why do they not come forward to accuse him when they are grown up? Or if they do not like to come forward, why do not their relatives, who are uncorrupted? It is because they know very well that he be speaking the truth, and that Anytus is a liar.

That is pretty much what he has to say. He will not appeal to the compassion of the judges. Such conduct brings disgrace on Athens; and besides, the judges have sworn to decide according to law, and to appeal to their feelings would be to try to make them forswear themselves: he is accused of impiety, he will not accuse himself of impiety by such conduct. With these words he commits his cause to the judges and to God.

At this point the judges vote. He is condemned by 281 to 220. Meletus' speech in support of sentence of death follows, and then Socrates' speech in favour of his alternative penalty. He has expected to be condemned, and by a much larger majority. What shall he propose as his penalty? What does he

deserve for his life? He is a public benefactor; and he thinks that he ought to have a public maintenance in the Prytaneum, like an Olympic victor. Seriously, why should he propose a penalty? He is sure that he has done no wrong. He does not know whether death is a good or an evil. Why should he propose something that he knows to be an evil? Payment of a fine would be no evil, but then he has no money to pay a fine with; perhaps he can make up one mina: that is his proposal. Or, as his friends wish it, he offers thirty minæ, and his friends will be sureties for payment.

The Athenians, as they were logically bound to do, condemn him to death. They have voted against him, wishing to be relieved from the necessity of having to give an account of their lives, and after their verdict he affirms more strongly than ever that he will not cease from examining them. With the sentence of death the trial ends; but in the *Apology* Socrates addresses some last words to those who have condemned him, and to those who have acquitted him. The former he sternly rebukes for their crime, and foretells the evil that awaits them as the consequence of it: to the latter he wishes to talk about what has befallen him, and death. They must be of good cheer. No harm can come to a good man in life or in death. Death is either an eternal and dreamless sleep, wherein there is no sensation at all; or it is a journey to another and a better world, where are the famous men of old. Whichever

alternative be true, death is not an evil but a good. His own death is willed by the gods, and he is content. He has only one request to make, that his judges will trouble his sons, as he has troubled his judges, if his sons set riches above virtue, and think themselves great men when they are worthless. 'But now the time has come for us to depart, for me to die and for you to live. Whether life or death be better is known only to God.' So ends this wonderful dialogue.

The first question which presents itself to a reader of the *Apology* is, How far does it coincide with, or represent what Socrates actually said in his defence? We know from Xenophon that he might easily have obtained a verdict, if he would have consented to conciliate his judges with prayers and flattery;[1] and also that the divine sign forbade him to prepare any defence.[2] But that is all that we know of his defence, apart from the *Apology*, and if the *Apology* contains any of the actual utterances of Socrates, we have no means of determining which they are. I think that Mr. Riddell has shown beyond any reasonable doubt (although Zeller speaks of the opposite view as 'well established') that the structure of the defence is the work of Plato. He points out (Introduction, p. xx.) that whereas Xenophon declares that Socrates prepared no speech, the *Apology* is 'artistic to the core,' and full of 'subtle rhetoric.' Take, for example,

[1] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 4. 4. Cf. *Apol.* 34 C.
[2] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 8. 5. Cf. *Apol.* 17 B.

the argument against the charges of the first accusers (ch. ii.-x.) Their slanders and prejudices are, as a matter of fact, merely those of the mass of Athenians, including the judges. To have attacked those prejudices openly would have been merely to give offence to the judges. The attack on them is therefore masked. It is not made on '*your* slanders and prejudices' (except only in 19 A. and 24 A.) but on the slanders and prejudices of certain individuals, whose very names Socrates does not know ('except in the case of the comic poets') who have been accusing him falsely for many years, very persistently. Further, as Mr. Riddell points out, the *Apology* is full of rhetorical commonplaces. 'The exordium may be paralleled, piece by piece, from the orators.' And the whole defence is most artistically arranged, with the answer to the formal indictment in the middle, where it is least prominent, being the least important part of the speech. Apart from the structure of the *Apology*, the style and language is clearly Plato's, whatever may be said about the substance of it.

'Notwithstanding, we can seek in the *Apology* a portrait of Socrates before his judges, and not be disappointed. Plato has not laid before us a literal narrative of the proceedings, and bidden us thence form the conception for ourselves; rather he has intended us to form it through the medium of his art. The structure is his, the language is his, much of the substance may be his: notwithstanding, quite independ-

ently of the literal truth of the means, he guarantees to us a true conception of the scene and of the man. We see that 'liberam contumaciam a magnitudine animi ductam non a superbiâ' (Cic. *Tusc.* i. 29), and feel that it must be true to Socrates, although with Cicero himself we have derived the conception from Plato's ideal and not from history. We hear Meletus subjected to a questioning which, though it may not have been the literal ἐρώτησις of the trial, exhibits to us the great questioner in his own element. We discover repeated instances of the irony, which, uniting self-appreciation with a true and unflattering estimate of others, declines to urge considerations which lie beyond the intellectual or moral ken of the judges. Here we have that singularity of ways and thoughts which was half his offence obtruding itself to the very last in contempt of consequences. Here we have that characteristic assertion of private judgment against authority which declares itself in the words ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς, ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἀσπάζομαι μὲν καὶ φιλῶ, πείσομαι δὲ μᾶλλον τῷ θεῷ ἢ ὑμῖν (29 D.) Here we have also his disapproval of the existing democracy of Athens which he rather parades than disguises. And lastly, the deep religiousness which overshadowed all his character breathes forth in the account he renders of his past life, in his anticipations of the future, and in his whole present demeanour.

'Thus while the problem of the relation of the *Apology* to what Socrates actually said

must remain unsolved, there is no doubt that it bodies forth a lifelike representation; a representation of Socrates as Plato wished us to conceive of him, and yet at the same time as true to nature as the art of Plato could render it.'[1] Plato, we know was present at the trial:[2] he knew well how Socrates had defended himself: he doubtless often discussed that memorable day with Socrates in the prison: and he had an intense reverence for his great master. Of course he could not give a verbatim report of a speech made without even a note: there were no shorthand writers at Athens. But he knew the substance of the defence. His *Apology* may perhaps be compared to the speeches in Thucydides, who observes that it was difficult to remember the exact things said by the speakers on each occasion, but that he has adhered as closely as possible to the general sense and substance of their arguments.[3]

We know very little about the specific charges contained in the speeches for the prosecution. The only direct reference to them in the *Apology* is in Socrates' passing disclaimer of any responsibility for the political crimes of men like Alcibiades and Critias.[4] Xenophon tells us that 'the accuser' charged Socrates with bringing the constitution into contempt by criticising the system of election to political office by lot: with teaching children to treat their fathers with contumely: with arguing that

[1] Riddell, Introduction, p. xxvii.
[2] *Apol.* 38 B.
[3] Thucyd. i. 22. 1.
[4] *Apol.* 33 A.

people should love and respect only those who could be useful to them: with being responsible for the crimes of Alcibiades and Critias: with wresting bad passages from Homer and Hesiod to immoral uses.[1] There is no reason to doubt that he did in fact criticise election to office by lot adversely. That institution, and indeed all popular government, was obviously incompatible with his whole intellectual position. He believed that government is an art, and the most important of all arts, and that as such it requires more training, knowledge, and skill than any other.[2] He would not have left the decision of political questions to chance, or to the vote of the uneducated majority. The other charges are mere stupid and malignant lies, which Socrates passes by in silence. He deals with the formal indictment lightly, and to some extent, sophistically. The broad ground taken up by the prosecution was that Socrates' whole way of life and teaching is vicious, immoral, and criminal. That was the real charge which he had to meet. The avowed purpose of his unceasing examination was to expose the hollowness of received opinion about human affairs: and to understand the animosity which such an avowal aroused in Athens, it is necessary to remember that to the Greek this received opinion represented the traditional

[1] Xen. *Mem.* i. 2. 9. 12. 49. *seq.*

[2] Xen. *Mem.* iv. 2. 2; cf. *Rep.* 488, 489, 551 C. D., and the amusing description of a democracy, *ibid.* 557 E. *seq.*

unwritten law of the State. And the State meant a great deal more to a Greek than it means to us. It was not a mere association of men for the protection of life and property. It was a sacred thing, to be loved and revered. It had the authority of a church. If we bear that in mind we shall comprehend better the bitterness called forth by Socrates' attack on received opinions, and the strength of the position taken up by his accusers in their prosecution. He concentrates the entire force and emphasis of his argument to meet them on that ground. His defence is a review and justification of his life and 'philosophy.' It is not an apology. Socrates utters no single syllable of regret for the unceasing cross-examination of men, which was alleged against him as a crime. Neither is it accurate to say that he 'defies' the Athenians. He speaks of them individually and as a people in terms of strong affection. He loved his fellow-countrymen intensely. He has no quarrel with them at all. He is unfeignedly sorry for their mistakes and their faults, and he does what he can to correct them by pointing out why they are wrong. He does not defy them. What he does is firmly and absolutely to decline to obey them, be the consequences what they may.

The *Apology* brings out one point about Socrates very strongly which must be noticed, namely 'the deep religiousness which overshadowed all his character.' To him religion meant something very different from the poly-

theistic and mythological system which was current among his countrymen. We have seen in the *Euthyphron* how strongly he condemned the horrible and immoral tales about the gods which were contained in Greek mythology,[1] and how he fears that his condemnation of them makes him unpopular. He was far too earnestly and really religious a man not to be indignant at such stories, or to accept as satisfactory the popular State religion. He deals rather carelessly with the count in the indictment charging him with disbelief in the gods of Athens. He nowhere commits himself to a recognition of them, though he emphatically denies that he is an atheist. 'Athenians,' he says in the last words of his defence,[2] 'I do believe in the gods as no one of my accusers believes in them: and to you and to God I commit my cause to be decided as is best for you and for me.' His God was the God of Plato, who is good, and the cause of all good and never the cause of evil: He 'is one and true in word and deed: He neither changes Himself, nor deceives others:'[3] the unknown God, at whose altar the Athenians some four centuries later ignorantly worshipped: 'the power in darkness whom we guess.' 'God alone,' says Socrates, 'is wise and knows all things.'[4] He protects good men from evil.[5] He declares

[1] See also *Rep.* 377 E. *seq.* [2] *Apol.* 35 D.
[3] *Rep.* 379 B. *seq.*, 382 E. See Professor Max Muller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, vol. ii. lect. ix.
[4] *Apol.* 23 A., 42 A. [5] *Apol.* 30 D.

His will to men by dreams and oracles, and the priestess at Delphi is His mouthpiece.[1] His law and His commands are supreme and must be obeyed at all costs.[2] We have already seen how Socrates looked on his search for wisdom as a duty laid upon him by God.[3] He continually speaks of it as 'the service of God,"[4] which must be performed at all hazards, and from which no danger, and no threats could be allowed to turn him back. He will not hold his peace, even to save his life. 'Athenians, I hold you in the highest regard and love, but I will obey God rather than you'[5] —words strikingly parellel to St. Peter's words 'we ought to obey God rather than men' (*Acts* v. 29). And in the service of God he died.[6]

There is one very obscure question relating to Socrates' religious opinions. He believed that he had certain special and peculiar communications from God through his 'divine sign.' In the *Apology* he explains it to be a voice from God which had been with him continually from childhood upwards, which frequently warned him even in quite small matters, and which was always negative, restraining him from some action.[7] It is diffi-

[1] *Apol.* 21 A., 33 C.
[2] *Apol.* 21 E., 28 E.
[3] Cf. *ante*, p. xxvi.
[4] *Apol.* 22 A., 23 B.
[5] *Apol.* 29 D.
[6] For Xenophon's account of Socrates' religious opinions, see *Zeller*, p. 175, and the passages referred to there, especially the remarkable words in *Mem.* i. 1. 19; i. 3. 2. 3. Xenophon, however, as Zeller points out, is inconsistent.
[7] *Apol.* 31 C., 40 A.

cult to say what this 'divine sign' was. It is clear enough that it was not conscience, for it dealt not with the morality, but with the expediency of actions. In this dialogue it does not forbid him to desert his post and neglect the duty of examining men which God had laid upon him. He will not do that because he will not disobey God. The divine sign forbids him to enter on public life, because it would be inexpedient to do so.[1] Besides, conscience is positive as well as negative, and Socrates could hardly claim a monopoly of it. M. Lélut, in a book called *Du Démon de Socrate* (1836), argues 'que Socrate était un fou,' and classes him with Luther, Pascal, Rousseau, and others.[2] He thinks that Socrates in his hallucinations really believed that he heard a voice. Zeller says that the divine sign is 'the general form which a vivid, but in its origin unexplained, sense of the propriety of a particular action assumed for the personal consciousness of Socrates,' 'the inner voice of individual tact,' cultivated to a pitch of extraordinary accuracy.[3] Mr. Riddell, in an appendix of great interest, collects all the passages from Xenophon and Plato, and points out that the two accounts are contradictory. Taking Xenophon's account he believes 'that it was a quick exercise of a judg-

[1] *Apol.* 31 D.

[2] See Mr. Henry Jackson, *Journal of Philology*, No. 10, p. 232.

[3] *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, p. 94.

ment, informed by knowledge of the subject, trained by experience, and inferring from cause to effect without consciousness of the process' (p. 114). If we take Plato's account he thinks explanation impossible: we cannot go beyond what Socrates says. Dr. Thompson (Master of Trinity College, Cambridge), after pointing out that it is a sign or voice from the gods, and not, as has been sometimes said, a genius or attendant spirit, seems to accept Schleiermacher's opinion as most probable, that it 'denotes the province of such rapid moral judgments as cannot be referred to distinct grounds, which accordingly Socrates did not attribute to his proper self: for instance, presentiment of the issue of an undertaking: attraction or repulsion in reference to particular individuals.'[1] Fortunately the question is curious rather than important, for it can hardly be said that there is evidence enough to settle it.

At the close of the *Apology* Socrates is about to be led away to prison. His death was delayed by a certain mission which the Athenians annually sent to Apollo at Delos: for while the mission was away no one could be put to death in Athens.[2] Socrates therefore had to spend a long time ironed in the prison, in which the scene of the Crito is laid. It is early morning, and Socrates is still asleep.

[1] Butler's *Lectures on the History of Ancient Philosophy.* Edited by Dr. Thompson, 2d ed., p. 238, note 19.

[2] See *Phædo*, 58 A.

Crito has come before the usual time, the bearer of news which is more bitter to him than to Socrates, that the ship of the mission is at Sunium and will soon reach the Peiræus; on the following day Socrates will have to die. For the last time Crito implores him to escape and save himself. It will be quite easy and will not cost his friends much; and there are many places for him to go to. If he stays, he will be doing the work of his foes; he will be deserting his children, and covering himself with ridicule and his friends with disgrace. 'Think what men will say of us.'

Socrates replies that he has been guided by reason, and has disregarded the opinion of men all his life. It matters not what the world will say, but what the one man who knows what Right is will say, and what Truth herself will think of us. The question is, Shall I be doing right in escaping, and will you be doing right in aiding my escape? Crito agrees to that, and to the first principle which Socrates lays down as a starting-point:—if any one wrong us, we may not wrong him in return. We have no right to repay evil with evil, though few men think so or ever will think so. Such a sentiment must indeed have sounded strange to Socrates' contemporaries; Greek morality was, do good to your friends, and harm to your enemies, a proposition which Xenophon puts into the mouth of Socrates himself.[1]

Socrates then starts from the principle, that

[1] *Mem.* ii. 6. 35.

it is wrong to return evil for evil. Apply that to his case: he will be wronging the state if he escapes from prison and from death against the will of the Athenians; by so doing, he will be doing all he can to destroy the state of which he is a citizen. A city in which private individuals set aside at their will the judicial decisions and laws of the state, cannot continue to exist: it must be destroyed. It may be that an individual is condemned unjustly: then the laws are either bad, or, as he says at the end of the dialogue, badly administered. Still, the individual may not take the matter into his own hands. The members of all bodies of men, and therefore of the state, must sacrifice their individual wills, more or less, to the whole to which they belong. They must obey the rules or laws of the whole, or it will perish. Even in bodies of bad men there must be, and is, a certain harmony and unanimity.[1] The *Crito* represents Socrates as the good citizen, who has been condemned unjustly 'not by the laws but by men,' but who will not retaliate on the state and destroy it: he will submit to death. Were he to escape, the laws would come and ask him why he was trying to destroy them, and if he replied that they had wronged him, they would retort that he had agreed to be bound by all the judicial decisions of the state. He owes everything to them—his birth, his bringing up, his education; he is their offspring and slave, and bound

[1] Cf. *Rep.* 352 C. D.

to do whatever they bid him without an answer. He has agreed to that; and his consent to the agreement was not got from him by force or fraud: he has had seventy years to consider it; for they permit any man who chooses, to leave the city and go elsewhere. Socrates has not only not done that, he has remained within the walls more than any Athenian, so contented was he. He might have proposed exile as the penalty at his trial, and it would have been accepted, but he expressly refused to do so. And if he runs away, where will he go to? Orderly men and cities will look askance at him as a lawless person: life will not be worth living in disorderly states like Thessaly; what could he do there? He would scarcely have the face to converse about virtue. Will he go away to Thessaly for dinner? And will he take his children with him, and make them strangers to their own country? Or will he leave them in Athens? What good will he do them then? His friends, if they are real friends, will take as much care of them if he goes to the other world as if he goes to Thessaly. Let him stay and die, and he will go away an injured man, and the laws of Hades will receive him kindly. Such are the arguments he hears murmured in his ears. Crito admits that he cannot answer them.

We have no means of saying whether the incident of this dialogue ever occurred. Plato was quite capable of inventing it. Doubtless however Socrates' friends would have liked to

save his life, and nothing is more likely than that they proposed escape to him. Crito is met with again in the *Phædo*. He is an old and intimate friend, who asks for Socrates' last commands, and is with him at his last parting from his family, and closes his eyes after death. He is not good at argument; and it is worth noticing that, in the latter half of the *Crito*, the dialogue almost becomes a monologue: the reasoning in the *Phædo* makes but little impression on him.[1]

In the *Phædo* the story of Socrates' death is related at Phlius to Echecrates and other Phliasians by Phædo, who had been with his master to the end. It is a dialogue within a dialogue, the scene of the first being Phlius, and of the second the prison, a day or two after the incident narrated in the *Crito*.[2] Phædo first explains how the mission to Apollo delayed Socrates' death for so long:[3] he tells who were present, how they heard the night before of the arrival of the ship from Delos, and how they arranged to go to Socrates the next morning very early. Then we are taken into the prison, where Socrates has just been released from his fetters, and Xanthippe, who is soon sent away wailing, is sitting by him. Socrates remarks on the close connection of pleasure and pain, and then the conversation turns upon suicide, which Socrates says is wrong, though

[1] See *Phædo*, 115 D. E.
[2] *Crito*, 44 A.
[3] Thirty days.—Xen. *Mem.* iv. 8. 2.

the philosopher will always long to die. Such a man, when he is dead, will be cared for by good gods, he will be with better companions than on earth, and he will be released from the body, which is a perpetual hindrance to the soul in her pursuit of truth. Philosophy is a study of death; the philosopher longs to be emancipated from the bondage of the body, for he desires knowledge, which is attainable only after death. Those who fear death do not love wisdom, but their bodies, or wealth, or honour. And their virtue is a strange thing. They are brave from a fear of greater evils, and temperate because intemperance prevents them from enjoying certain pleasures. Such virtue is utterly false, and unsound, and slavish. True virtue is a purification of the soul, and those who have purified their souls will be with the gods after death. Therefore Socrates is ready to die.

Cebes fears that when a man dies his soul vanishes away like smoke. Socrates proceeds to discuss the immortality of the soul. In the first place, by a confusion of sequence and effect, he argues that opposites are generated from opposites: and therefore life from death. If it were not so, if death were generated from life, and not life from death, everything would at length be dead. He next makes use of the Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence. All our knowledge is a remembrance of what we have known at some previous time, and that can only have been before we were born. Our

souls therefore must have existed before they entered our bodies. Simmias admits that, but wants a further proof that they will continue to exist when we are dead. Socrates has no objection to go on with the discussion, though the further proof is needless. Which, he asks, is most liable to dissolution, the simple and unchanging, or the compound and changing? that which is akin to the divine, or that which is akin to the mortal? Clearly the former in both instances; in other words the soul is less subject to dissolution than the body. But the body, if it be properly embalmed, may be preserved for ages, and parts of it, as the bones, are to all intents and purposes immortal. Can it be said then that the soul vanishes away at death? Far from it: the pure soul goes hence to a place that is glorious, and pure, and invisible, and lives with the gods, while the soul that is impure flutters about tombs, weighed down by her earthly element, until she is again imprisoned in the body of some animal with habits congenial to the habits of her previous life. The sensual soul for instance goes into the body of an ass; the unjust or tyrannical soul into the body of a wolf or a kite: such souls as have been just and temperate, though without philosophy or intelligence, go into the bodies of some gentle creature, the bee, or the wasp, or, it may be, of moderate men. Only the souls of philosophers go and live with the gods. That is why philosophers abstain from bodily pleasures.

Simmias and Cebes are still unconvinced, and with a little pressure are induced to state their difficulties. Simmias believes the soul to be a harmony of the elements of the body, and that she is to the body, as a musical harmony is to a lyre. But a musical harmony, though diviner than the lyre, does not survive it. Cebes grants the soul to be much more enduring than the body, but he cannot see that the soul has been proved to be immortal.

At this point there is a break in the argument. The listeners nearly despair on hearing these objections. Then Socrates proceeds, first warning them against coming to hate reasoning, because it has sometimes deceived them. The fault is not in reasoning, but in themselves. And he begs them to be careful that he does not mislead them in his eagerness to prove the soul immortal. He is an interested party.

He answers Simmias first. Does Simmias still believe in the doctrine of Reminiscence? He does. Then the soul is not a harmony of the elements of the body: if she were, she would have existed before the elements which compose her. And the soul leads, and is never more or less a soul. In those things she differs from a harmony, and so Simmias' objection fails. Cebes' point is more important. To answer him involves an investigation of the whole question of generation and decay; but Socrates is willing to narrate his own experiences on the subject. In his youth he had a pas-

sion for Natural Philosophy: he thought about it till he was completely puzzled. He could not understand the mechanical and physical causes of the philosophers. He hoped great things from Anaxagoras, who, he was told, said that Mind was the Universal Cause, and who, he expected, would show that everything was ordered in the best way. He was grievously disappointed. Anaxagoras made no use of mind at all, but introduced air, and ether, and a number of strange things as causes. In his disappointment he turned to investigate the question of causation for himself. All his hearers will admit the existence of absolute Ideas. He made up his mind that Ideas are the causes of phenomena, beauty of beautiful things, greatness of great things, and so on. Echecrates interposes the remark that any man of sense will agree to that. Socrates goes on to show that opposite Ideas cannot coexist in the same person: if it is said that Simmias is both tall and short, because he is taller than Socrates and shorter than Phædo, that is true; but he is only tall and short relatively. An Idea must always perish or retreat before its opposite. Further than that, an Idea will not only not admit its opposite; it will not admit that which is inseparable from its opposite. The opposite of cold is heat; and just as cold will not admit heat, so it will not admit fire, which is inseparable from heat. Cold and fire cannot coexist in the same object. So life is the opposite of death, and

life is inseparable from the soul. Therefore the soul will not admit death. She is immortal, and therefore indestructible: and when a man dies his soul goes away safe and unharmed. Simmias admits that he has nothing to urge against Socrates' reasoning though he cannot say that he is quite satisfied. Human reason is weak and the subject vast.

But if the soul lives on after death, how terrible must be the danger of neglecting her! For she takes to Hades nothing but her nurture and education, and these make a great difference to her at the very beginning of her journey thither. Socrates then describes the soul's journey to the other world, and her life there: a remark that the earth is a wonderful place, not at all like what it is commonly thought to be, leads to the description of the earth in the famous Myth of the *Phædo*, which Plato, with consummate art, interposes between the hard metaphysical argument of the dialogue, and the account of Socrates' death. Socrates describes the earth, its shape, and character, and inhabitants, and beauty. We men, who think we live on its surface, really live down in a hollow. Other men live on the surface, which is much fairer than our world. Then he goes on to describe Tartarus and its rivers, of which the chief are Oceanus, Acheron, Pyriphlegethon, and Cocytus. He proceeds to speak of the judgment and rewards and punishments of the souls after death: a man who has devoted himself to his soul and not to his body need not

be afraid of death, which is a complete release from the body, for for him there is a place prepared of wonderful beauty. Socrates has not time to speak of it now. It is getting late, and he must bathe and prepare for death.

Crito asks for Socrates' last commands. The argument has made no impression on him; he does not understand that Socrates is going away, and wishes to know how to bury him. Socrates leaves that to his friends, 'only you must catch me first.' Then he goes away with Crito to bathe, and takes leave of his family: there is but little conversation after that. The poison is brought, and Socrates drinks it calmly, without changing colour, rebuking his friends for their noisy grief. A few moments before he dies he remembers that he owes a cock to Asclepius. Crito must pay it for him. Then there was a convulsive movement, and he was dead.

The *Phædo* is not a dialogue of which much need be said. The perfect beauty of Plato's description of his great master's death at the hands of the law, which is singular for the complete absence of anything violent or repulsive from it, is best left to speak for itself; and the greater part of the dialogue is occupied with Platonic metaphysics, with which we are not concerned. For the *Phædo* may be divided into two parts, the historical, and the philosophical. Plato was not present at Socrates' death;[1] but there is no reason for doubting

[1] *Phædo*, 59 B.

that his account of it is substantially correct. He must have often heard the story of that last day from eye-witnesses. The philosophy of the *Phædo* is another matter. There is no doubt that that is not Socratic, but Platonic.[1] It is likely enough that the last day of Socrates' life, even to the setting of the sun, when he was to die, was spent with his friends in the accustomed examination of himself and them, and in the search after hard intellectual truth to which his whole life had been devoted; and it may well be that his demeanour was, in fact, more serious and earnest than usual on that day, as if, in spite of all his confident belief in a future life, death had cast the solemnity of its shadow upon him. But it is quite certain that the metaphysical arguments of the *Phædo* were not those used by Socrates, in his prison, or at any other time. That can be very shortly proved. In the *Phædo*, Socrates is represented as a keen and practised metaphysician, who has definite theories about the origin of knowledge, and the causes of Being. He 'is fond of stating'[2] the doctrine that knowledge is an imperfect recollection of what we have known in a previous state of existence: and he is quite familiar with the doctrine of ideas. But the real Socrates, the Socrates of the *Apology* and the admittedly Socratic dialogues, and of Xenophon, confined himself strictly to questions affecting men and society.[3] All

[1] See Zeller's *Plato*, ch. iii. p. 133, and ch. ix.

[2] *Phædo*, 72 E. [3] *E.g. Apol.* 30 B., 33 B.

that he knew was that he was ignorant. His greatness as a thinker does not consist in the fact that he was the author or the teacher of any system of positive philosophy, metaphysical or other; but in the fact that he was the first man who conceived the very idea of scientific knowledge, and of the method of arriving at it. And it must be remembered that the *Apology*, which contains Plato's account of Socrates, as he actually conceived him to be, represents a speech delivered only thirty days before the conversation reported in the *Phædo*. Once more; in the *Phædo* the immortality of the soul is ultimately proved by the doctrine of Ideas. Now Aristotle, whose evidence is the best that we can have on such a point, expressly tells us [1] that the doctrine of Ideas was never known to Socrates at all; but that it was a distinct advance on his theory of definitions made by Plato. Plato, in fact, has done in the *Phædo* what he so often did; he has employed Socrates as the chief character in a dialogue, and then put into Socrates' mouth opinions and arguments which the Socrates of history never dreamt of. By far the greater part of the conversation therefore recorded in the *Phædo* never took place. There is no record whatsoever of the actual conversation of that last day.

Such a man was Socrates, in his life and in his death. He was just and feared not. He might easily have saved himself from death, if only he would have consented to cease from

[1] *Metaph.* xii. 4. 5.

forcing his countrymen to give an account of their lives. But he believed that God had sent him to be a preacher of righteousness to the Athenians; and he refused to be silent on any terms. 'I cannot hold my peace,' he says, 'for that would be to disobey God.' Tennyson's famous lines have been often and well applied to him:—

> 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
> Yet not for power (power of herself
> Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
> Acting the law we live by without fear;
> And, because right is right, to follow right
> Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'[1]

They illustrate his faith, 'his burning faith in God and Right.' Knowing nothing certainly of what comes after death, and having no sure hope of a reward in the next world, he resolutely chose to die sooner than desert the post at which God had placed him, or do what he believed to be wrong.

[1] *Œnone.*

EUTHYPHRON

CHARACTERS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES.

EUTHYPHRON.

SCENE.—The porch of the King Archon.

EUTHYPHRON.

Euth. What in the world are you doing here at the archon's porch, Socrates? Why have you left your haunts in the Lyceum? You surely cannot have an action before him, as I have. CHAP. 1. Steph. p. 2.

Socr. Nay, the Athenians, Euthyphron, call it a prosecution, not an action.

Euth. What? Do you mean that some one is prosecuting you? I cannot believe that you are prosecuting any one yourself.

Socr. Certainly I am not.

Euth. Then is some one prosecuting you?

Socr. Yes.

Euth. Who is he?

Socr. I scarcely know him myself, Euthyphron; I think he must be some unknown young man. His name, however, is Meletus, and his deme Pitthis, if you can call to mind any Meletus of that deme,—a hook-nosed man with long hair, and rather a scanty beard.

Euth. I don't know him, Socrates. But, tell me, what is he prosecuting you for?

Socr. What for? Not on trivial grounds, I think. It is no small thing for so young a man to have formed an opinion on such an important

matter. For he, he says, knows how the young are corrupted, and who are their corruptors. He must be a wise man, who, observing my ignorance, is going to accuse me to the city, as his mother, of corrupting his friends. I think that he is the only man who begins at the right point in his political reforms: I mean whose first care is to make the young men as perfect as possible, just as a good farmer will take care of his young plants first, and, after he has done that, of the others. And so
3. Meletus, I suppose, is first clearing us off, who, as he says, corrupt the young men as they grow up; and then, when he has done that, of course he will turn his attention to the older men, and so become a very great public benefactor. Indeed, that is only what you would expect, when he goes to work in this way.

II. *Euth.* I hope it may be so, Socrates, but I have very grave doubts about it. It seems to me that in trying to injure you, he is really setting to work by striking a blow at the heart of the state. But how, tell me, does he say that you corrupt the youth?

Socr. In a way which sounds strange at first, my friend. He says that I am a maker of gods; and so he is prosecuting me, he says, for inventing new gods, and for not believing in the old ones.

Euth. I understand, Socrates. It is because you say that you always have a divine sign. So he is prosecuting you for introducing novelties

into religion; and he is going into court knowing that such matters are easily misrepresented to the multitude, and consequently meaning to slander you there. Why, they laugh even me to scorn, as if I were out of my mind, when I talk about divine things in the assembly, and tell them what is going to happen: and yet I have never foretold anything which has not come true. But they are jealous of all people like us. We must not think about them: we must meet them boldly.

Socr. My dear Euthyphron, their ridicule is III. not a very serious matter. The Athenians, it seems to me, may think a man to be clever without paying him much attention, so long as they do not think that he teaches his wisdom to others. But as soon as they think that he makes other people clever, they get angry whether it be from jealousy, as you say, or for some other reason.

Euth. I am not very anxious to try their disposition towards me in this matter.

Socr. No, perhaps they think that you seldom show yourself, and that you are not anxious to teach your wisdom to others; but I fear that they may think that I am; for my love of men makes me talk to every one whom I meet quite freely and unreservedly, and without payment: indeed, if I could, I would gladly pay people myself to listen to me. If then, as I said just now, they were only going to laugh at me, as you say they do at you, it would not be at all an unpleasant way of spending the

day, to spend it in court, jesting and laughing. But if they are going to be in earnest, then only prophets like you can tell where the matter will end.

Euth. Well, Socrates, I dare say that nothing will come of it. Very likely you will be successful in your trial, and I think that I shall be in mine.

IV. *Socr.* And what is this suit of yours, Euthyphron? Are you suing, or being sued?

Euth. I am suing.

Socr. Whom?

4. *Euth.* A man whom I am thought a maniac to be suing.

Socr. What? Has he wings to fly away with?

Euth. He is far enough from flying; he is a very old man.

Socr. Who is he?

Euth. He is my father.

Socr. Your father, my good sir?

Euth. He is indeed.

Socr. What are you prosecuting him for? What is the charge?

Euth. It is a charge of murder, Socrates.

Socr. Good heavens, Euthyphron! Surely the multitude are ignorant of what makes right. I take it that it is not every one who could rightly do what you are doing; only a man who was already well advanced in wisdom.

Euth. That is quite true, Socrates.

Socr. Was the man whom your father killed a relative of yours? Nay, of course he was:

you would never have prosecuted your father for the murder of a stranger?

Euth. You amuse me, Socrates. What difference does it make whether the murdered man was a relative or a stranger? The only question that you have to ask is, did the slayer slay justly or not? If justly, you must let him alone; if unjustly, you must indict him for murder, even though he share your hearth and sit at your table. The pollution is the same, if you associate with such a man, knowing what he has done, without purifying yourself, and him too, by bringing him to justice. In the present case the murdered man was a poor dependant of mine, who worked for us on our farm in Naxos. In a fit of drunkenness he got in a rage with one of our slaves, and killed him. My father therefore bound the man hand and foot and threw him into a ditch, while he sent to Athens to ask the seer what he should do. While the messenger was gone, he entirely neglected the man, thinking that he was a murderer, and that it would be no great matter, even if he were to die. And that was exactly what happened; hunger and cold and his bonds killed him before the messenger returned. And now my father and the rest of my family are indignant with me because I am prosecuting my father for the murder of this murderer. They assert that he did not kill the man at all; and they say that, even if he had killed him over and over again, the man himself was a murderer, and that I ought not to concern

myself about such a person, because it is unholy for a son to prosecute his father for murder. So little, Socrates, do they know the divine law of holiness and unholiness.

Socr. And do you mean to say, Euthyphron, that you think that you understand divine things, and holiness and unholiness, so accurately that, in such a case as you have stated, you can bring your father to justice without fear that you yourself may be doing an unholy deed?

Euth. If I did not understand all these matters accurately, Socrates, I should be of no
5. use, and Euthyphron would not be any better than other men.

V. *Socr.* Then, my excellent Euthyphron, I cannot do better than become your pupil, and challenge Meletus on this very point before the trial begins. I should say that I had always thought it very important to have knowledge about divine things; and that now, when he says that I offend by speaking lightly about them, and by introducing novelties in them, I have become your pupil; and I should say, Meletus, if you acknowledge Euthyphron to be wise in these matters, and to hold the true belief, then think the same of me, and do not put me on my trial; but if you do not, then bring a suit, not against me, but against my master for corrupting his elders; namely, me whom he corrupts by his doctrine, and his own father whom he corrupts by admonishing and chastising him. And if I did not succeed in persuading him to release me from the suit, or

to indict you in my place, then I could repeat my challenge in court.

Euth. Yes, by Zeus, Socrates, I think I should find out his weak points, if he were to try to indict me. I should have a good deal to say about him in court long before I spoke about myself.

Socr. Yes, my dear friend, and knowing this, I am anxious to become your pupil. I see that Meletus here, and others too, seem not to notice you at all; but he sees through me without difficulty and at once, and prosecutes me for impiety forthwith. Now, therefore, please explain to me what you were so confident just now that you knew. Tell me what are piety and impiety with reference to murder and everything else. I suppose that holiness is the same in all actions; and that unholiness is always the opposite of holiness, and like itself, and that, as unholiness,[1] it always has the same essential nature, which will be found in whatever is unholy.

Euth. Certainly, Socrates, I suppose so.

Socr. Tell me, then; what is holiness, and VI. what is unholiness?

Euth. Well, then, I say that holiness means prosecuting the wrong doer who has committed murder or sacrilege, or any other such crime, as I am doing now, whether he be your father or your mother or whoever he be; and I say that unholiness means not prosecuting him. And observe, Socrates, I will give you a clear

[1] Reading *ἀνοσιότητα.*

proof, which I have already given to others, that it is so, and that doing right means not suffering the sacrilegious man, whosoever he may be. Men hold Zeus to be the best and the justest of the gods; and they admit that
6. Zeus bound his own father, Cronos, for devouring his children wickedly; and that Cronos in his turn castrated his father for similar reasons. And yet these same men are angry with me because I proceed against my father for doing wrong. So, you see, they say one thing in the case of the gods and quite another in mine.

Socr. Is not that why I am being prosecuted, Euthyphron? I mean, because I am displeased when I hear people say such things about the gods? I expect that I shall be called a sinner, because I doubt those stories.[1] Now if you, who understand all these matters so well, agree in holding all those tales true, then I suppose that I must needs give way. What could I say when I admit myself that I know nothing about them? But tell me, in the name of friendship, do you really believe that these things have actually happened.

Euth. Yes, and stranger ones too, Socrates, which the multitude do not know of.

Socr. Then you really believe that there is war among the gods, and bitter hatreds, and battles, such as the poets tell of, and which the great painters have depicted in our temples, especially in the pictures which cover the robe that is carried up to the Acropolis at

[1] Cf. *Rep.* ii. 377, *seq.*

the great Panathenaic festival. Are we to say that these things are true, Euthyphron?

Euth. Yes, Socrates, and more besides. As I was saying, I will relate to you many other stories about divine matters, if you like, which I am sure will astonish you when you hear them.

Socr. I dare say. You shall relate them VII.
to me at your leisure another time. At present please try to give a more definite answer to the question which I asked you just now. What I asked you, my friend, was, What is holiness? and you have not explained it to me, to my satisfaction. You only tell me that what you are doing now, namely prosecuting your father for murder, is a holy act.

Euth. Well, that is true, Socrates.

Socr. Very likely. But many other actions are holy, are they not, Euthyphron?

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. Remember, then, I did not ask you to tell me one or two of all the many holy actions that there are; I want to know what is the essential form[1] of holiness which makes all holy actions holy. You said, I think, that there is one form which makes all holy actions holy, and another form which makes all unholy actions unholy. Do you not remember?

Euth. I do.

Socr. Well, then, explain to me what is this form, that I may have it to turn to, and to use as a standard whereby to judge your actions, and

[1] Εἶδος.

those of other men, and be able to say that whatever action resembles it is holy, and whatever does not, is not holy.

Euth. Yes, I will tell you that, if you wish it, Socrates.

Socr. Certainly I wish it.

Euth. Well then, what is pleasing to the
7. gods is holy; and what is not pleasing to them is unholy.

Socr. Beautiful, Euthyphron. Now you have given me the answer that I wanted. Whether what you say is true, I do not know yet. But of course you will go on to prove the truth of it.

Euth. Certainly.

VIII. *Socr.* Come then, let us examine our words. The things and the men that are pleasing to the gods are holy; and the things and the men that are displeasing to the gods are unholy. But holiness and unholiness are not the same: they are as opposite as possible; was not that said?

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. And I think that that was very well said.

Euth. Yes, Socrates, that was certainly said.

Socr. Have we not also said, Euthyphron, that there are factions, and disagreements, and hatreds among the gods?

Euth. We have.

Socr. But what kind of disagreement, my friend, causes hatred and wrath? Let us look at the matter thus. If you and I were to dis-

agree as to whether one number were more than another, would that provoke us to anger, and make us enemies? Should we not settle such dispute at once by counting?

Euth. Of course.

Socr. And if we were to disagree as to the relative size of two things, we should measure them, and put an end to the disagreement at once, should we not?

Euth. Yes.

Socr. And should we not settle a question about the relative weight of two things, by weighing them?

Euth. Of course.

Socr. Then what is the question which would provoke us to anger, and make us enemies, if we disagreed about it, and could not come to a settlement? Perhaps you have not an answer ready: but listen to me. Is it not the question of right and wrong, of the honourable and the base, of the good and the bad? Is it not questions about these matters which make you and me, and every one else quarrel, when we do quarrel, if we differ about them, and can reach no satisfactory settlement?

Euth. Yes, Socrates; it is disagreements about these matters.

Socr. Well, Euthyphron, the gods will quarrel over these things, if they quarrel at all, will they not?

Euth. Necessarily.

Socr. Then, my excellent Euthyphron, you say that some of the gods think one thing right,

and others another: and that what some of them hold to be honourable or good, others hold to be base or evil. For there would not have been factions among them if they had not disagreed on these points, would there?

Euth. You are right.

Socr. And each of them loves what he thinks honourable, and good, and right, and hates the opposite, does he not?

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. But you say that the same action is held by some of them to be right, and by others to be wrong; and that then they dispute about
8. it, and so quarrel and fight among themselves. Is it not so?

Euth. Yes.

Socr. Then the same thing is hated by the gods and loved by them; and the same thing will be displeasing and pleasing to them.

Euth. Apparently.

Socr. Then, according to your account, the same thing will be holy and unholy.

Euth. So it seems.

IX. *Socr.* Then, my good friend, you have not answered my question. I did not ask you to tell me what action is both holy and unholy; but it seems that whatever is pleasing to the gods is also displeasing to them. And so, Euthyphron, I should not wonder if what you are doing now in chastising your father is a deed well-pleasing to Zeus, but hateful to Cronos and Ouranos, and acceptable to Hephæstus, but hateful to Hêrê; and if any of the other

gods disagree about it, pleasing to some of them and displeasing to others.

Euth. But on this point, Socrates, I think that there is no difference of opinion among the gods: they all hold that if one man kills another wrongfully, he must be punished.

Socr. What, Euthyphron? Among mankind, have you never heard disputes whether a man ought to be punished for killing another man wrongfully, or for doing some other wrong deed?

Euth. Indeed, they never cease from these disputes, especially in courts of justice. They do all manner of wrong things; and then there is nothing which they will not do and say to avoid punishment.

Socr. Do they admit that they have done wrong, and at the same time deny that they ought to be punished, Euthyphron?

Euth. No, indeed; that they do not.

Socr. Then it is not everything that they will do and say. I take it, they do not venture to assert or argue that if they do do wrong they must not be punished. What they say is that they have not done wrong, is it not?

Euth. That is true.

Socr. Then they do not dispute the proposition, that the wrong doer must be punished. They dispute about the question, who is a wrong doer, and when, and what is a wrong deed, do they not?

Euth. That is true.

Socr. Well, is not exactly the same thing

true of the gods, if they quarrel about right and wrong, as you say they do? Do not some of them assert that the others are doing wrong, while the others deny it? No one, I suppose, my dear friend, whether god or man, ventures to say that a person who has done wrong must not be punished.

Euth. No, Socrates, that is true, in the main.

Socr. I take it, Euthyphron, that the disputants, whether men or gods, if the gods do dispute, dispute about each separate act. When they quarrel about any act, some of them say that it was done rightly, and others that it was done wrongly. Is it not so?

Euth. Yes.

X. 9. *Socr.* Come then, my dear Euthyphron, please enlighten me on this point. What proof have you that all the gods think that a labourer who has been imprisoned for murder by the master of the man whom he has murdered, and who dies from his imprisonment before the master has had time to learn from the seers what he should do, dies by injustice? How do you know that it is right for a son to indict his father, and to prosecute him for the murder of such a man? Come, see if you can make it clear to me that the gods necessarily agree in thinking that this action of yours is right; and if you satisfy me, I will never cease singing your praises for wisdom.

Euth. I could make that clear enough to you, Socrates; but I am afraid that it would be a long business.

Socr. I see you think that I am duller than the judges. To them of course you will make it clear that your father has done wrong, and that all the gods agree in hating such deeds.

Euth. I will indeed, Socrates, if they will only listen to me.

Socr. They will listen, if only they think that XI. you speak well. But while you were speaking, it occurred to me to ask myself this question: suppose that Euthyphron were to prove to me as clearly as possible that all the gods think such a death unjust; how has he brought me any nearer to understanding what holiness and unholiness are? This particular act, perhaps, may be displeasing to the gods, but then we have just seen that holiness and unholiness cannot be defined in that way: for we have seen that what is displeasing to the gods is also pleasing to them. So I will let you off on this point, Euthyphron; and all the gods shall agree in thinking your father's deed wrong, and in hating it, if you like. But shall we correct our definition and say that whatever all the gods hate is unholy, and whatever they all love is holy: while whatever some of them love, and others hate, is either both or neither? Do you wish us now to define holiness and unholiness in this manner?

Euth. Why not, Socrates?

Socr. There is no reason why I should not, Euthyphron. It is for you to consider whether that definition will help you to instruct me as you promised.

Euth. Well, I should say that holiness is what all the gods love, and that unholiness is what they all hate.

Socr. Are we to examine this definition, Euthyphron, and see if it is a good one? or are we to be content to accept the bare assertions of other men, or of ourselves, without asking any questions? Or must we examine the assertions?

Euth. We must examine them. But for my part I think that the definition is right this time.

XII. 10. *Socr.* We shall know that better in a little while, my good friend. Now consider this question. Do the gods love holiness because it is holy, or is it holy because they love it?

Euth. I do not understand you, Socrates.

Socr. I will try to explain myself: we speak of a thing being carried and carrying, and being led and leading, and being seen and seeing; and you understand that all such expressions mean different things, and what the difference is.

Euth. Yes, I think I understand.

Socr. And we talk of a thing being loved, and, which is different, of a thing loving?

Euth. Of course.

Socr. Now tell me: is a thing which is being carried in a state of being carried, because it is carried, or for some other reason?

Euth. No, because it is carried.

Socr. And a thing is in a state of being led, because it is led, and of being seen, because it is seen?

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. Then a thing is not seen because it is in a state of being seen; it is in a state of being seen because it is seen: and a thing is not led because it is in a state of being led; it is in a state of being led because it is led: and a thing is not carried because it is in a state of being carried; it is in a state of being carried because it is carried. Is my meaning clear now, Euthyphron? I mean this: if anything becomes, or is affected, it does not become because it is in a state of becoming; it is in a state of becoming because it becomes; and it is not affected because it is in a state of being affected: it is in a state of being affected because it is affected. Do you not agree?

Euth. I do.

Socr. Is not that which is being loved in a state, either of becoming, or of being affected in some way by something?

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. Then the same is true here as in the former cases. A thing is not loved by those who love it because it is in a state of being loved. It is in a state of being loved because they love it.

Euth. Necessarily.

Socr. Well, then, Euthyphron, what do we say about holiness? Is it not loved by all the gods, according to your definition?

Euth. Yes.

Socr. Because it is holy, or for some other reason?

Euth. No, because it is holy.

Socr. Then it is loved by the gods because it is holy: it is not holy because it is loved by them?

Euth. It seems so.

Socr. But then what is pleasing to the gods is pleasing to them, and is in a state of being loved by them, because they love it?

Euth. Of course.

Socr. Then holiness is not what is pleasing to the gods, and what is pleasing to the gods is not holy, as you say, Euthyphron. They are different things.

Euth. And why, Socrates?

Socr. Because we are agreed that the gods love holiness because it is holy: and that it is not holy because they love it. Is not this so?

Euth. Yes.

XIII. *Socr.* And that what is pleasing to the gods because they love it, is pleasing to them by reason of this same love: and that they do not love it because it is pleasing to them.

Euth. True.

Socr. Then, my dear Euthyphron, holiness, and what is pleasing to the gods, are different things. If the gods had loved holiness because
11. it is holy, they would also have loved what is pleasing to them because it is pleasing to them; but if what is pleasing to them had been pleasing to them because they loved it, then holiness too would have been holiness, because they loved it. But now you see that they are opposite things, and wholly different from each other. For the

one[1] is of a sort to be loved because it is loved: while the other[2] is loved, because it is of a sort to be loved. My question, Euthyphron, was, What is holiness? But it turns out that you have not explained to me the essence of holiness; you have been content to mention an attribute which belongs to it, namely, that all the gods love it. You have not yet told me what is its essence. Do not, if you please, keep from me what holiness is; begin again and tell me that. Never mind whether the gods love it, or whether it has other attributes: we shall not differ on that point. Do your best to make clear to me what is holiness and what is unholiness.

Euth. But, Socrates, I really don't know how to explain to you what is in my mind. Whatever we put forward always somehow moves round in a circle, and will not stay where we place it.

Socr. I think that your definitions, Euthyphron, are worthy of my ancestor Dædalus. If they had been mine and I had laid them down, I dare say you would have made fun of me, and said that it was the consequence of my descent from Dædalus that the definitions which I construct run away, as his statues used to, and will not stay where they are placed. But, as it is, the definitions are yours, and the jest would have no point. You yourself see that they will not stay still.

Euth. Nay, Socrates, I think that the jest is

[1] What is pleasing to the gods. [2] What is holy.

very much in point. It is not my fault that the definition moves round in a circle and will not stay still. But you are the Dædalus, I think: as far as I am concerned, my definitions would have stayed quiet enough.

Socr. Then, my friend, I must be a more skilful artist than Dædalus: he only used to make his own works move; whereas I, you see, can make other people's works move too. And the beauty of it is that I am wise against my will. I would rather that our definitions had remained firm and immovable than have all the wisdom of Dædalus and all the riches of Tantalus to boot. But enough of this. I will do my best to help you to explain to me what holiness is: for I think that you are indolent. Don't give in yet. Tell me; do you not think that all holiness must be just?

Euth. I do.

Socr. Well, then, is all justice holy too?
12. Or, while all holiness is just, is a part only of justice holy, and the rest of it something else?

Euth. I do not follow you, Socrates.

Socr. Yet you have the advantage over me in your youth no less in your wisdom. But, as I say, the wealth of your wisdom makes you indolent. Exert yourself, my good friend: I am not asking you a difficult question. I mean the opposite of what the poet[1] said, when he wrote:—

'Thou wilt not name Zeus the creator, who made all things: for where there is fear there also is reverence.'

[1] Stasinus.

Now I disagree with the poet. Shall I tell you why?

Euth. Yes.

Socr. I do not think it true to say that where there is fear, there also is reverence. Many people who fear sickness and poverty and other such evils, seem to me to have fear, but no reverence for what they fear. Do you not think so?

Euth. I do.

Socr. But I think that where there is reverence, there also is fear. Does any man feel reverence and a sense of shame about anything, without at the same time dreading and fearing the character of baseness?

Euth. No, certainly not.

Socr. Then, though there is fear wherever there is reverence, it is not correct to say that where there is fear there also is reverence. Reverence does not always accompany fear; for fear, I take it, is wider than reverence. It is a part of fear, just as the odd is a part of number, so that where you have the odd, you must also have number, though where you have number, you do not necessarily have the odd. Now I think you follow me?

Euth. I do.

Socr. Well, then, this is what I meant by the question which I asked you: is there always holiness where there is justice? or, though there is always justice where there is holiness, yet there is not always holiness where there is justice, because holiness is only a part of justice? Shall we say this, or do you differ?

Euth. No: I agree. I think that you are right.

XIV. *Socr.* Now observe the next point. If holiness is a part of justice, we must find out, I suppose, what part of justice it is? Now, if you had asked me just now, for instance, what part of number is the odd, and what number is an odd number, I should have said that whatever number is not even, is an odd number. Is it not so?

Euth. Yes.

Socr. Then see if you can explain to me what part of justice is holiness, that I may tell Meletus that now that I have learnt perfectly from you what actions are pious and holy, and what are not, he must give up prosecuting me unjustly for impiety.

Euth. Well then, Socrates, I should say that piety and holiness are that part of justice which has to do with the attention which is due to the gods: and that what has to do with the attention which is due to men, is the remaining part of justice.

XV. *Socr.* And I think that your answer is a
13. good one, Euthyphron. But there is one little point, of which I still want to hear more. I do not yet understand what the attention or care which you are speaking of is. I suppose you do not mean that the care which we show to the gods is like the care which we show to other things. We say, for instance, do we not, that not every one knows how to take care of horses, but only the trainer of horses?

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. For I suppose that the art that relates to horses means the care of horses.

Euth. Yes.

Socr. And not every one understands the care of dogs, but only the huntsman.

Euth. True.

Socr. For I suppose that the huntsman's art means the care of dogs.

Euth. Yes.

Socr. And the herdsman's art means the care of cattle.

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. And you say that holiness and piety mean the care of the gods, Euthyphron?

Euth. I do.

Socr. Well, then, has not all care the same object? Is it not for the good and benefit of that on which it is bestowed? for instance, you see that horses are benefited and improved when they are cared for by the art which is concerned with them. Is it not so?

Euth. Yes; I think so.

Socr. And dogs are benefited and improved by the huntsman's art, and cattle by the herdsman's, are they not? And the same is always true. Or do you think the care is ever meant to hurt that on which it is bestowed?

Euth. No indeed; certainly not.

Socr. But to benefit it?

Euth. Of course.

Socr. Then is holiness, which is the care which we bestow on the gods, intended to bene-

fit the gods, or to improve them? Should you allow that you make any of the gods better, when you do an holy action?

Euth. No indeed; certainly not.

Socr. No: I am quite sure that that is not your meaning, Euthyphron: it was for that reason that I asked you what you meant by the attention due to the gods. I thought that you did not mean that.

Euth. You were right, Socrates. I do not mean that.

Socr. Good. Then what sort of attention to the gods will holiness be?

Euth. The attention, Socrates, of slaves to their masters.

Socr. I understand: then it is a kind of service to the gods?

Euth. Certainly.

XVI. *Socr.* Can you tell me what result the art which serves a doctor serves to produce? Is it not health?

Euth. Yes.

Socr. And what result does the art which serves a shipwright serve to produce?

Euth. A ship, of course, Socrates.

Socr. The result of the art which serves a builder is a house, is it not?

Euth. Yes.

Socr. Then tell me, my excellent friend: What result will the art which serves the gods serve to produce? You must know, seeing that you say that you know more about divine things than any other man.

Euth. Well, that is true, Socrates.

Socr. Then tell me, I beseech you, what is that grand result which the gods use our services to produce?

Euth. The results are many and noble, Socrates.

Socr. So are those, my dear sir, which a 14.
general produces. Yet it is easy to see that the crowning result of them all is victory in war, is it not?

Euth. Of course.

Socr. And, I take it, the husbandman produces many fine results; yet the crowning result of them all is that he makes the earth produce food.

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. Well, then, what is the crowning one of the many and noble results which the gods produce?

Euth. I told you just now, Socrates, that it is not so easy to learn the exact truth in all these matters. However, broadly I say this: if any man knows that his words and deeds in prayer and sacrifice are acceptable to the gods, that is what is holy: that preserves the common weal, as it does private households, from evil; but the opposite of what is acceptable to the gods is impious, and this it is that brings ruin and destruction on all things.

Socr. Certainly, Euthyphron, if you had XVII.
wished, you could have answered my main question in far fewer words. But you are evidently not anxious to instruct me: just now,

when you were just on the point of telling me what I want to know, you stopped short. If you had gone on then, I should have learnt from you clearly enough by this time what is holiness. But now I am asking you questions, and must follow wherever you lead me; so tell me, what is it that you mean by the holy and holiness? Do you not mean a science of prayer and sacrifice?

Euth. I do.

Socr. To sacrifice is to give to the gods, and to pray is to ask of them, is it not?

Euth. It is, Socrates.

Socr. Then you say that holiness is the science of asking of the gods, and giving to them?

Euth. You understand my meaning exactly, Socrates.

Socr. Yes, for I am eager to share your wisdom, Euthyphron, and so I am all attention: nothing that you say will fall to the ground. But tell me, what is this service of the gods? You say it is to ask of them, and to give to them?

Euth. I do.

XVIII. *Socr.* Then, to ask rightly will be to ask of them what we stand in need of from them, will it not?

Euth. Naturally.

Socr. And to give rightly will be to give back to them what they stand in need of from us? It would not be very clever to make a present to a man of something that he has no need of.

Euth. True, Socrates.

Socr. Then, holiness, Euthyphron, will be an art of traffic between gods and men?

Euth. Yes, if you like to call it so.

Socr. Nay, I like nothing but what is true. But tell me, how are the gods benefited by the gifts which they receive from us? What they give us is plain enough. Every good thing that we have is their gift. But how are 15.
they benefited by what we give them? Have we the advantage over them in this traffic so much that we receive from them all the good things we possess and give them nothing in return?

Euth. But do you suppose, Socrates, that the gods are benefited by the gifts which they receive from us?

Socr. But what *are* these gifts, Euthyphron, that we give the gods?

Euth. What do you think but honour, and homage, and, as I have said, what is acceptable to them.

Socr. Then holiness, Euthyphron, is acceptable to the gods, but it is not profitable, nor dear to them?

Euth. I think that nothing is dearer to them.

Socr. Then I see that holiness means that which is dear to the gods.

Euth. Most certainly.

Socr. After that, shall you be surprised to XIX.
find that your definitions move about, instead of staying where you place them? Shall you charge me with being the Dædalus that makes

them move, when you yourself are far more skilful than Dædalus was, and make them go round in a circle? Do you not see that our definition has come round to where it was before? Surely you remember that we have already seen that holiness, and what is pleasing to the gods, are quite different things. Do you not remember?

Euth. I do.

Socr. And now do you not see that you say that what the gods love is holy? But does not what the gods love come to the same thing as what is pleasing to the gods?

Euth. Certainly.

Socr. Then either our former conclusion was wrong, or, if that was right, we are wrong now.

Euth. So it seems.

X. *Socr.* Then we must begin again, and inquire what is holiness. I do not mean to give in until I have found out. Do not deem me unworthy; give your whole mind to the question, and this time tell me the truth. For if any one knows it, it is you; and you are a Proteus whom I must not let go until you have told me. It cannot be that you would ever have undertaken to prosecute your aged father for the murder of a labouring man unless you had known exactly what is holiness and unholiness. You would have feared to risk the anger of the gods, in case you should be doing wrong, and you would have been afraid of what men would say. But now I am sure that you think that you know exactly what is holiness

and what is not: so tell me, my excellent Euthyphron, and do not conceal from me what you hold it to be.

Euth. Another time, then, Socrates. I am in a hurry now, and it is time for me to be off.

Socr. What are you doing, my friend! Will you go away and destroy all my hopes of learning from you what is holy and what is not, and so of escaping Meletus? I meant to explain to him that now Euthyphron has made me wise about divine things, and that I no 16c
longer in my ignorance speak rashly about them or introduce novelties in them; and then I was going to promise him to live a better life for the future.

THE APOLOGY

CHARACTERS.

SOCRATES.

MELETUS.

SCENE.—The Court of Justice.

THE APOLOGY.

Socr. I cannot tell what impression my accusers have made upon you, Athenians: for my own part, I know that they nearly made me forget who I was, so plausible were they; and yet they have scarcely uttered one single word of truth. But of all their many falsehoods, the one which astonished me most, was when they said that I was a clever speaker, and that you must be careful not to let me mislead you. I thought that it was most impudent of them not to be ashamed to talk in that way; for as soon as I open my mouth the lie will be exposed, and I shall prove that I am not a clever speaker in any way at all: unless, indeed, by a clever speaker they mean a man who speaks the truth. If that is their meaning, I agree with them that I am a much greater orator than they. My accusers, then I repeat, have said little or nothing that is true; but from me you shall hear the whole truth. Certainly you will not hear an elaborate speech, Athenians, drest up, like theirs, with words and phrases. I will say to you what I have to say, without preparation, and in the words which come first, for I believe

I. Steph. p. 17.

that my cause is just; so let none of you expect anything else. Indeed, my friends, it would hardly be seemly for me, at my age, to come before you like a young man with his specious falsehoods. But there is one thing, Athenians, which I do most earnestly beg and entreat of you. Do not be surprised and do not interrupt, if in my defence I speak in the same way that I am accustomed to speak in the market-place, at the tables of the money-changers, where many of you have heard me, and elsewhere. The truth is this. I am more than seventy years old, and this is the first time that I have ever come before a Court of Law; so your manner of speech here is quite strange to me. If I had been really a stranger, you would have forgiven me for speaking in the language and
18. the fashion of my native country: and so now I ask you to grant me what I think I have a right to claim. Never mind the style of my speech—it may be better or it may be worse—give your whole attention to the question, Is what I say just, or is it not? That is what makes a good judge, as speaking the truth makes a good advocate.

II. I have to defend myself, Athenians, first against the old false charges of my old accusers, and then against the later ones of my present accusers. For many men have been accusing me to you, and for very many years, who have not uttered a word of truth: and I fear them more than I fear Anytus and his companions, formidable as they are. But, my

friends, those others are still more formidable; for they got hold of most of you when you were children, and they have been more persistent in accusing me with lies, and in trying to persuade you that there is one Socrates, a wise man, who speculates about the heavens, and who examines into all things that are beneath the earth, and who can 'make the worse appear the better reason.'[1] These men, Athenians, who spread abroad this report, are the accusers whom I fear; for their hearers think that persons who pursue such inquiries never believe in the gods. And then they are many, and their attacks have been going on for a long time: and they spoke to you when you were at the age most readily to believe them: for you were all young, and many of you were children: and there was no one to answer them when they attacked me. And the most unreasonable thing of all is that commonly I do not even know their names: I cannot tell you who they are, except in the case of the comic poets.[2] But all the rest who have been trying to prejudice you against me, from motives of spite and jealousy, and sometimes, it may be, from conviction, are the enemies whom it is hardest to meet. For I cannot call any one of them forward in Court, to cross-examine him: I have, as it were, simply to fight with shadows

[1] Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii. 113.

[2] *E.g.* Aristophanes; see Introduction. Eupolis, and probably Ameipsias, had made similar attacks on Socrates.

in my defence, and to put questions which there is no one to answer. I ask you, therefore, to believe that, as I say, I have been attacked by two classes of accusers—first by Meletus and his friends, and then by those older ones of whom I have spoken. And, with your leave, I will defend myself first against my old enemies; for you heard their accusations first, and they were much more persistent than my present accusers are.

Well, I must make my defence, Athenians,
19. and try in the short time allowed me to remove the prejudice which you have had against me for a long time. I hope that I may manage to do this, if it be good for you and for me, and that my defence may be successful; but I am quite aware of the nature of my task, and I know that it is a difficult one. Be the issue, however, as God wills, I must obey the law, and make my defence.

III. Let us begin again, then, and see what is the charge which has given rise to the prejudice against me, which was what Meletus relied on when he drew his indictment. What is the calumny which my enemies have been spreading about me? I must assume that they are formally accusing me, and read their indictment. It would run somewhat in this fashion: "Socrates is an evil-doer, who meddles with inquiries into things beneath the earth, and in heaven, and who 'makes the worse appear the better reason,' and who teaches others these same things." That is what they say; and in the Comedy of

Aristophanes [1] you yourselves saw a man called Socrates swinging round in a basket, and saying that he walked the air, and talking a great deal of nonsense about matters of which I understand nothing, either more or less. I do not mean to disparage that kind of knowledge, if there is any man who possesses it. I trust Meletus may never be able to prosecute me for that. But, the truth is, Athenians, I have nothing to do with these matters, and almost all of you are yourselves my witnesses of this. I beg all of you who have ever heard me converse, and they are many, to inform your neighbours and tell them if any of you have ever heard me conversing about such matters, either more or less. That will show you that the other common stories about me are as false as this one.

But, the fact is, that not one of these stories IV.
is true; and if you have heard that I undertake
to educate men, and exact money from them
for so doing, that is not true either; though I 20.
think that it would be a fine thing to be able to
educate men, as Gorgias of Leontini, and Prodicus of Ceos, and Hippias of Elis do. For each of them, my friends, can go into any city, and persuade the young men to leave the society of their fellow-citizens, with any of whom they might associate for nothing, and to be only too glad to be allowed to pay money for the privilege of associating with themselves. And I believe that there is another wise man from

[1] *The Clouds.*

Paros residing in Athens at this moment. I happened to meet Callias, the son of Hipponicus, a man who has spent more money on the Sophists than every one else put together. So I said to him—he has two sons—Callias, if your two sons had been foals or calves, we could have hired a trainer for them who would have made them perfect in the excellence which belongs to their nature. He would have been either a groom or a farmer. But whom do you intend to take to train them, seeing that they are men? Who understands the excellence which belongs to men and to citizens? I suppose that you must have thought of this, because of your sons. Is there such a person, said I, or not? Certainly there is, he replied. Who is he, said I, and where does he come from, and what is his fee? His name is Evenus, Socrates, he replied: he comes from Paros, and his fee is five minæ. Then I thought that Evenus was a fortunate person if he really understood this art and could teach so cleverly. If I had possessed knowledge of that kind, I should have given myself airs and prided myself on it. But, Athenians, the truth is that I do not possess it.

V. Perhaps some of you may reply: But, Socrates, what is this pursuit of yours? Whence come these calumnies against you? You must have been engaged in some pursuit out of the common. All these stories and reports of you would never have gone about, if you had not been in some way different from other men.

So tell us what your pursuits are, that we may not give our verdict in the dark. I think that that is a fair question, and I will try to explain to you what it is that has raised these calumnies against me, and given me this name. Listen, then: some of you perhaps will think that I am jesting; but I assure you that I will tell you the whole truth. I have gained this name, Athenians, simply by reason of a certain wisdom. But by what kind of wisdom? It is by just that wisdom which is, I believe, possible to men. In that, it may be, I am really wise. But the men of whom I was speaking just now must be wise in a wisdom which is greater than human wisdom, or in some way which I cannot describe, for certainly I know nothing of it myself, and if any man says that I do, he lies and wants to slander me. Do not interrupt me, Athenians, even if you think that I am speaking arrogantly. What I am going to say is not my own: I will tell you who says it, and he is worthy of your credit. I will bring the god of Delphi to be the witness of the fact of my wisdom and of its nature. You remember Chærephon. From youth upwards he was my comrade; and he 21
went into exile with the people,[1] and with the people he returned. And you remember, too, Chærephon's character; how vehement he was in carrying through whatever he took in hand. Once he went to Delphi and ventured to put this question to the oracle,—I entreat you again, my friends, not to cry out,—he asked if

[1] At the time of the oligarchy of the Thirty, 404 B.C.

there was any man who was wiser than I: and the priestess answered that there was no man. Chærephon himself is dead, but his brother here will confirm what I say.

VI. Now see why I tell you this. I am going to explain to you the origin of my unpopularity. When I heard of the oracle I began to reflect: What can God mean by this dark saying? I know very well that I am not wise, even in the smallest degree. Then what can he mean by saying that I am the wisest of men? It cannot be that he is speaking falsely, for he is a god and cannot lie. And for a long time I was at a loss to understand his meaning: then, very reluctantly, I turned to seek for it in this manner. I went to a man who was reputed to be wise, thinking that there, if anywhere, I should prove the answer wrong, and meaning to point out to the oracle its mistake, and to say, 'You said that I was the wisest of men, but this man is wiser than I am.' So I examined the man—I need not tell you his name, he was a politician—but this was the result, Athenians. When I conversed with him I came to see that, though a great many persons, and most of all he himself, thought that he was wise, yet he was not wise. And then I tried to prove to him that he was not wise, though he fancied that he was: and by so doing I made him, and many of the bystanders, my enemies. So when I went away, I thought to myself, "I am wiser than this man: neither of us probably knows anything that is really good, but he thinks that

he has knowledge, when he has not, while I, having no knowledge, do not think that I have. I seem, at any rate, to be a little wiser than he is on this point: I do not think that I know what I do not know." Next I went to another man who was reputed to be still wiser than the last, with exactly the same result. And there again I made him, and many other men, my enemies.

Then I went on to one man after another, VII
seeing that I was making enemies every day, which caused me much unhappiness and anxiety: still I thought that I must set God's command above everything. So I had to go to every man who seemed to possess any knowledge, and search for the meaning of the oracle: and, Athenians, I must tell you the truth; 22.
verily, by the dog of Egypt, this was the result of the search which I made at God's bidding. I found that the men, whose reputation for wisdom stood highest, were nearly the most lacking in it; while others, who were looked down on as common people, were much better fitted to learn. Now, I must describe to you the wanderings which I undertook, like a series of Heraclean labours, to make full proof of the oracle. After the politicians, I went to the poets, tragic, dithyrambic, and others, thinking that there I should find myself manifestly more ignorant than they. So I took up the poems on which I thought that they had spent most pains, and asked them what they meant, hoping at the same time to learn something from

them. I am ashamed to tell you the truth, my friends, but I must say it. Almost any one of the bystanders could have talked about the works of these poets better than the poets themselves. So I soon found that it is not by wisdom that the poets create their works, but by a certain natural power and by inspiration, like soothsayers and prophets, who say many fine things, but who understand nothing of what they say. The poets seemed to me to be in a similar case. And at the same time I perceived that, because of their poetry, they thought that they were the wisest of men in other matters too, which they were not. So I went away again, thinking that I had the same advantage over the poets that I had over the politicians.

VIII. Finally, I went to the artizans, for I knew very well that I possessed no knowledge at all, worth speaking of, and I was sure that I should find that they knew many fine things. And in that I was not mistaken. They knew what I did not know, and so far they were wiser than I. But, Athenians, it seemed to me that the skilled artizans made the same mistake as the poets. Each of them believed himself to be extremely wise in matters of the greatest importance, because he was skilful in his own art: and this mistake of theirs threw their real wisdom into the shade. So I asked myself, on behalf of the oracle, whether I would choose to remain as I was, without either their wisdom or their ignorance, or to

possess both, as they did. And I made answer to myself and to the oracle that it was better for me to remain as I was.

By reason of this examination, Athenians, IX. 23.
I have made many enemies of a very fierce and bitter kind, who have spread abroad a great number of calumnies about me, and people say that I am 'a wise man.'[1] For the bystanders always think that I am wise myself in any matter wherein I convict another man of ignorance. But, my friends, I believe that only God is really wise: and that by this oracle he meant that men's wisdom is worth little or nothing. I do not think that he meant that Socrates was wise. He only made use of my name, and took me as an example, as though he would say to men, 'He among you is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that in very truth his wisdom is worth nothing at all.' And therefore I still go about testing and examining every man whom I think wise, whether he be a citizen or a stranger, as God has commanded me; and whenever I find that he is not wise, I point out to him on the part of God that he is not wise. And I am so busy in this pursuit that I have never had leisure to take any part worth mentioning in public matters, or to look after my private affairs. I am in very great poverty by reason of my service to God.

[1] The expression *σόφος ἀνηρ*, 'wise men,' was the general title at Athens for Natural Philosophers and Sophists, indifferently.—Riddell, *Introduction*, p. xxxii.

X. And besides this, the young men who follow me about, who are the sons of wealthy persons and have a great deal of spare time, take a natural pleasure in hearing men cross-examined: and they often imitate me among themselves: then they try their hands at cross-examining other people. And, I imagine, they find a great abundance of men who think that they know a great deal, when in fact they know little or nothing. And then the persons who are cross-examined, get angry with me instead of with themselves, and say that Socrates is an abominable fellow who corrupts young men. And when they are asked, 'Why, what does he do? what does he teach?' they do not know what to say; but, not to seem at a loss, they repeat the stock charges against all philosophers, and allege that he investigates things in the air and under the earth, and that he teaches people to disbelieve in the gods, and 'to make the worse appear the better reason.' For, I fancy, they would not like to confess the truth, which is that they are shown up as ignorant pretenders to knowledge that they do not possess. And so they have been filling your ears with their bitter calumnies for a long time, for they are zealous and numerous and bitter against me; and they are well disciplined and plausible in speech. On these grounds Meletus and Anytus and Lycon have attacked me. Meletus is indignant with me on the part of the poets, and Anytus on the part of the artizans and poli-
24. ticians, and Lycon on the part of the orators.

And so, as I said at the beginning, I shall be surprised if I am able, in the short time allowed me for my defence, to remove from your minds this prejudice which has grown so strong. What I have told you, Athenians, is the truth: I neither conceal, nor do I suppress anything, small or great. And yet I know that it is just this plainness of speech which makes me enemies. But that is only a proof that my words are true, and that the prejudice against me, and the causes of it, are what I have said. And whether you look for them now or hereafter, you will find that they are so.

What I have said must suffice as my defence XI
against the charges of my first accusers. I will try next to defend myself against that 'good patriot' Meletus, as he calls himself, and my later accusers. Let us assume that they are a new set of accusers, and read their indictment, as we did in the case of the others. It runs thus. He says that Socrates is an evil-doer who corrupts the youth, and who does not believe in the gods whom the city believes in, but in other new divinities. Such is the charge. Let us examine each point in it separately. Meletus says that I do wrong by corrupting the youth: but I say, Athenians, that he is doing wrong; for he is playing off a solemn jest by bringing men lightly to trial, and pretending to have a great zeal and interest in matters to which he has never given a moment's thought. And now I will try to prove to you that it is so.

Come here, Meletus. Is it not a fact that XII

you think it very important that the younger men should be as excellent as possible?

Meletus. It is.

Socrates. Come then: tell the judges, who is it who improves them? You take so much interest in the matter that of course you know that. You are accusing me, and bringing me to trial, because, as you say, you have discovered that I am the corrupter of the youth. Come now, reveal to the judges who improves them. You see, Meletus, you have nothing to say; you are silent. But don't you think that this is a scandalous thing? Is not your silence a conclusive proof of what I say, that you have never given a moment's thought to the matter? Come, tell us, my good sir, who makes the young men better citizens?

Mel. The laws.

Socr. My excellent sir, that is not my question. What man improves the young, who starts with a knowledge of the laws?

Mel. The judges here, Socrates.

Socr. What do you mean, Meletus? Can they educate the young and improve them?

Mel. Certainly.

Socr. All of them? or only some of them?

Mel. All of them.

Socr. By Hêrê that is good news! There is a great abundance of benefactors. And do
25. the listeners here improve them, or not?

Mel. They do.

Socr. And do the senators?

Mel. Yes.

Socr. Well then, Meletus; do the members of the Assembly corrupt the younger men? or do they again all improve them?

Mel. They too improve them.

Socr. Then all the Athenians, apparently, make the young into fine fellows except me, and I alone corrupt them. Is that your meaning?

Mel. Most certainly; that is my meaning.

Socr. You have discovered me to be a most unfortunate man. Now tell me: do you think that the same holds good in the case of horses? Does one man do them harm and every one else improve them? On the contrary, is it not one man only, or a very few—namely, those who are skilled in horses—who can improve them; while the majority of men harm them, if they use them, and have to do with them? Is it not so, Meletus, both with horses and with every other animal? Of course it is, whether you and Anytus say yes or no. And young men would certainly be very fortunate persons if only one man corrupted them, and every one else did them good. The truth is, Meletus, you prove conclusively that you have never thought about the youth in your life. It is quite clear, on your own showing, that you take no interest at all in the matters about which you are prosecuting me.

Now, be so good as to tell us, Meletus, is it XIII.
better to live among good citizens or bad ones? Answer, my friend: I am not asking you at all a difficult question. Do not bad citizens do harm to their neighbours and good citizens good?

Mel. Yes.

Socr. Is there any man who would rather be injured than benefited by his companions? Answer, my good sir: you are obliged by the law to answer. Does any one like to be injured?

Mel. Certainly not.

Socr. Well then; are you prosecuting me for corrupting the young, and making them worse men, intentionally or unintentionally?

Mel. For doing it intentionally.

Socr. What, Meletus? Do you mean to say that you, who are so much younger than I, are yet so much wiser than I, that you know that bad citizens always do evil, and that good citizens always do good, to those with whom they come in contact, while I am so extraordinarily stupid as not to know that if I make any of my companions a rogue, he will probably injure me in some way, and as to commit this great crime, as you allege, intentionally? You will not make me believe that, nor any one else either, I should think. Either I do not
26. corrupt the young at all; or if I do, I do so unintentionally: so that you are a liar in either case. And if I corrupt them unintentionally, the law does not call upon you to prosecute me for a fault like that, which is an involuntary one: you should take me aside and admonish and instruct me: for of course I shall cease from doing wrong involuntarily, as soon as I know that I have been doing wrong. But you declined to instruct me: you would have

nothing to do with me: instead of that, you bring me up before the Court, where the law sends persons, not for instruction, but for punishment.

The truth is, Athenians, as I said, it is quite XIV. clear that Meletus has never paid the slightest attention to these matters. However, now tell us, Meletus, how do you say that I corrupt the younger men? Clearly, according to your indictment, by teaching them not to believe in the gods of the city, but in other new divinities instead. You mean that I corrupt young men by that teaching, do you not?

Mel. Yes: most certainly; I mean that.

Socr. Then in the name of these gods of whom we are speaking, explain yourself a little more clearly to me and to the judges here. I cannot understand what you mean. Do you mean that I teach young men to believe in some gods, but not in the gods of the city? Do you accuse me of teaching them to believe in strange gods? If that is your meaning, I myself believe in some gods, and my crime is not that of absolute atheism. Or do you mean that I do not believe in the gods at all myself, and that I teach other people not to believe in them either?

Mel. I mean that you do not believe in the gods in any way whatever.

Socr. Wonderful Meletus! Why do you say that? Do you mean that I believe neither the sun nor the moon to be gods, like other men?

Mel. I swear he does not, judges: he says that the sun is a stone, and the moon earth.

Socr. My dear Meletus, do you think that you are prosecuting Anaxagoras? You must have a very poor opinion of the judges, and think them very unlettered men, if you imagine that they do not know that the works of Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ are full of these doctrines. And so young men learn these things from me, when they can often buy places in the theatre[1] for a drachma at most, and laugh Socrates to scorn, were he to pretend that these doctrines, which are very peculiar doctrines too, were his. But please tell me, do you really think that I do not believe in the gods at all?

Mel. Most certainly I do. You are a complete atheist.

Socr. No one believes that, Meletus, and I think that you know it to be a lie yourself. It seems to me, Athenians, that Meletus is a very insolent and wanton man, and that he is prosecuting me simply in the insolence and wantonness of youth. He is like a man trying an
27. experiment on me, by asking me a riddle that has no answer. 'Will this wise Socrates,' he says to himself, 'see that I am jesting and contradicting myself? or shall I outwit him and every one else who hears me?' Meletus seems

[1] He alludes to the caricatures of Anaxagoras by Aristophanes, and other comic poets, and to tragedians like Euripides, who introduced the doctrines of Anaxagoras into their dramas. The doctrine that the sun is a stone is referred to in an extant play.—Eurip. *Orest.* 971.

to me to contradict himself in his indictment: it is as if he were to say, 'Socrates is a wicked man who does not believe in the gods, but who believes in the gods.' But that is mere trifling.

Now, my friends, let us see why I think that XV.
this is his meaning. Do you answer me, Meletus: and do you, Athenians, remember the request which I made to you at starting, and do not interrupt me if I talk in my usual way.

Is there any man, Meletus, who believes in the existence of things pertaining to men and not in the existence of men? Make him answer the question, my friends, without these absurd interruptions. Is there any man who believes in the existence of horsemanship and not in the existence of horses? or in flute-playing and not in flute-players? There is not, my excellent sir. If you will not answer, I will tell both you and the judges that. But you must answer my next question. Is there any man who believes in the existence of divine things and not in the existence of divinities?

Mel. There is not.

Socr. I am very glad that the judges have managed to extract an answer from you. Well then, you say that I believe in divine beings, whether they be old or new ones, and that I teach others to believe in them; at any rate, according to your statement, I believe in divine beings. That you have sworn in your deposition. But if I believe in divine beings, I suppose it follows necessarily that I believe in divinities. Is it not so? It is. I assume that

you grant that, as you do not answer. But do we not believe that divinities are either gods themselves or the children of the gods? Do you admit that?

Mel. I do.

Socr. Then you admit that I believe in divinities: now, if these divinities are gods, then, as I say, you are jesting and asking a riddle, and asserting that I do not believe in the gods, and at the same time that I do, since I believe in divinities. But if these divinities are the illegitimate children of the gods, either by the nymphs or by other mothers, as they are said to be, then, I ask, what man could believe in the existence of the children of the gods, and not in the existence of the gods? That would be as strange as believing in the existence of the offspring of horses and asses, and not in the existence of horses and asses. You must have indicted me in this manner, Meletus, either to test my skill, or because you could not find any crime that you could accuse me of with truth. But you will never contrive to persuade any man, even of the smallest understanding, that a belief in divine things and things of the gods does not necessarily
28. involve a belief in divinities, and in the gods, and in heroes.

XVI. But in truth, Athenians, I do not think that I need say very much to prove that I have not committed the crime for which Meletus is prosecuting me. What I have said is enough to prove that. But, I repeat, it is certainly true,

as I have already told you, that I have incurred much unpopularity and made many enemies. And that is what will cause my condemnation, if I am condemned; not Meletus, nor Anytus either, but the prejudice and suspicion of the multitude. They have been the destruction of many good men before me, and I think that they will be so again. There is no fear that I shall be their last victim.

Perhaps some one will say: 'Are you not ashamed, Socrates, of following pursuits which are very likely now to cause your death?' I should answer him with justice, and say: 'My friend, if you think that a man of any worth at all ought to reckon the chances of life and death when he acts, or that he ought to think of anything but whether he is acting rightly or wrongly, and as a good or a bad man would act, you are grievously mistaken. According to you, the demigods who died at Troy would be men of no great worth, and among them the son of Thetis, who thought nothing of danger when the alternative was disgrace. For when his mother, a goddess, addressed him, as he was burning to slay Hector, I suppose in this fashion, 'My son, if thou avengest the death of thy comrade Patroclus, and slayest Hector, thou wilt die thyself, for "fate awaits thee straightway after Hector's death;"' he heard what she said, but he scorned danger and death; he feared much more to live a coward, and not to avenge his friend. 'Let me punish the evil-doer and straightway die,' he said,

'that I may not remain here by the beaked ships, a scorn of men, encumbering the earth.'[1] Do you suppose that he thought of danger or of death? For this, Athenians, I believe to be the truth. Wherever a man's post is, whether he has chosen it of his own will, or whether he has been placed at it by his commander, there it is his duty to remain and face the danger, without thinking of death, or of any other thing, except dishonour.

XVII. When the generals whom you chose to command me, Athenians, placed me at my post at Potidæa, and at Amphipolis, and at Delium, I remained where they placed me, and ran the risk of death, like other men: and it would be very strange conduct on my part if I were to desert my post now from fear of death or of any other thing, when God has commanded me, as I am persuaded that he has done, to
29. spend my life in searching for wisdom, and in examining myself and others. That would indeed be a very strange thing: and then certainly I might with justice be brought to trial for not believing in the gods: for I should be disobeying the oracle, and fearing death, and thinking myself wise, when I was not wise. For to fear death, my friends, is only to think ourselves wise, without being wise: for it is to think that we know what we do not know. For anything that men can tell, death may be the greatest good that can happen to them: but they fear it as if they knew quite well that it

[1] Hom. *Il.* xviii. 96, 98.

was the greatest of evils. And what is this but that shameful ignorance of thinking that we know what we do not know? In this matter too, my friends, perhaps I am different from the mass of mankind: and if I were to claim to be at all wiser than others, it would be because I do not think that I have any clear knowledge about the other world, when, in fact, I have none. But I do know very well that it is evil and base to do wrong, and to disobey my superior, whether he be man or god. And I will never do what I know to be evil, and shrink in fear from what, for all that I can tell, may be a good. And so, even if you acquit me now, and do not listen to Anytus' argument that, if I am to be acquitted, I ought never to have been brought to trial at all; and that, as it is, you are bound to put me to death, because, as he said, if I escape, all your children will forthwith be utterly corrupted by practising what Socrates teaches; if you were therefore to say to me, 'Socrates, this time we will not listen to Anytus: we will let you go; but on this condition, that you cease from carrying on this search of yours, and from philosophy; if you are found following those pursuits again, you shall die:' I say, if you offered to let me go on these terms, I should reply:—'Athenians, I hold you in the highest regard and love; but I will obey God rather than you: and as long as I have breath and strength I will not cease from philosophy, and from exhorting you, and declaring the truth to

every one of you whom I meet, saying, as I am wont, "My excellent friend, you are a citizen of Athens, a city which is very great and very famous for wisdom and power of mind; are you not ashamed of caring so much for the making of money, and for reputation, and for honour? Will you not think or care about wisdom, and truth, and the perfection of your soul?" And if he disputes my words, and says that he does care about these things, I shall not forthwith release him and go away: I shall question him and cross-examine him and test him: and if I think that he has not virtue, though he says that he has, I shall reproach him for setting
30. the lower value on the most important things, and a higher value on those that are of less account. This I shall do to every one whom I meet, young or old, citizen or stranger: but more especially to the citizens, for they are more nearly akin to me. For, know well, God has commanded me to do so. And I think that no better piece of fortune has ever befallen you in Athens than my service to God. For I spend my whole life in going about and persuading you all to give your first and chiefest care to the perfection of your souls, and not till you have done that to think of your bodies, or your wealth; and telling you that virtue does not come from wealth, but that wealth, and every other good thing which men have, whether in public, or in private, comes from virtue. If then I corrupt the youth by this teaching, the mischief is great: but if any man

says that I teach anything else, he speaks falsely. And therefore, Athenians, I say, either listen to Anytus, or do not listen to him: either acquit me, or do not acquit me: but be sure that I shall not alter my way of life; no, not if I have to die for it many times.

Do not interrupt me, Athenians. Remember XVIII.
the request which I made to you, and listen to my words. I think that it will profit you to hear them. I am going to say something more to you, at which you may be inclined to cry out: but do not do that. Be sure that if you put me to death, who am what I have told you that I am, you will do yourselves more harm than me. Meletus and Anytus can do me no harm: that is impossible: for I am sure that God will not allow a good man to be injured by a bad one. They may indeed kill me, or drive me into exile, or deprive me of my civil rights; and perhaps Meletus and others think those things great evils. But I do not think so: I think that it is a much greater evil to do what he is doing now, and to try to put a man to death unjustly. And now, Athenians, I am not arguing in my own defence at all, as you might expect me to do: I am trying to persuade you not to sin against God, by condemning me, and rejecting his gift to you. For if you put me to death, you will not easily find another man to fill my place. God has sent me to attack the city, as if it were a great and noble horse, to use a quaint simile, which was rather sluggish from its size, and which needed

to be aroused by a gadfly: and I think that I am the gadfly that God has sent to the city to attack it; for I never cease from settling upon
31. you, as it were, at every point, and rousing, and exhorting, and reproaching each man of you all day long. You will not easily find any one else, my friends, to fill my place: and if you take my advice, you will spare my life. You are vexed, as drowsy persons are, when they are awakened, and of course, if you listened to Anytus, you could easily kill me with a single blow, and then sleep on undisturbed for the rest of your lives, unless God were to care for you enough to send another man to arouse you. And you may easily see that it is God who has given me to your city: a mere human impulse would never have led me to neglect all my own interests, or to endure seeing my private affairs neglected now for so many years, while it made me busy myself unceasingly in your interests, and go to each man of you by himself, like a father, or an elder brother, trying to persuade him to care for virtue. There would have been a reason for it, if I had gained any advantage by this conduct, or if I had been paid for my exhortations; but you see yourselves that my accusers, though they accuse me of everything else without blushing, have not had the effrontery to say that I ever either exacted or demanded payment. They could bring no evidence of that. And I think that I have sufficient evidence of the truth of what I say in my poverty.

XIX. Perhaps it may seem strange to you that,

though I am so busy in going about in private with my counsel, yet I do not venture to come forward in the assembly, and take part in the public councils. You have often heard me speak of my reason for this, and in many places: it is that I have a certain divine sign from God, which is the divinity that Meletus has caricatured in his indictment. I have had it from childhood: it is a kind of voice, which whenever I hear it, always turns me back from something which I was going to do, but never urges me to act. It is this which forbids me to take part in politics. And I think that it does well to forbid me. For, Athenians, it is quite certain that if I had attempted to take part in politics, I should have perished at once and long ago, without doing any good either to you or to myself. And do not be vexed with me for telling the truth. There is no man who will preserve his life for long, either in Athens or elsewhere, if he firmly opposes the wishes of the people, and tries to prevent the commission of much injustice and illegality in the State. He who would really fight for justice, must do 32.
so as a private man, not in public, if he means to preserve his life, even for a short time.

I will prove to you that this is so by very XX.
strong evidence, not by mere words, but by what you value highly, actions. Listen then to what has happened to me, that you may know that there is no man who could make me consent to do wrong from the fear of death; but that I would perish at once rather than give

way. What I am going to tell you may be a commonplace in the Courts of Law; nevertheless it is true. The only office that I ever held in the State, Athenians, was that of Senator. When you wished to try the ten generals, who did not rescue their men after the battle of Arginusæ, in a body, which was illegal, as you all came to think afterwards, the tribe Antiochis, to which I belong, held the presidency. On that occasion I alone of all the presidents opposed your illegal action, and gave my vote against you. The speakers were ready to suspend me and arrest me; and you were clamouring against me, and crying out to me to submit. But I thought that I ought to face the danger out in the cause of law and justice, rather than join with you in your unjust proposal, from fear of imprisonment or death. That was before the destruction of the democracy. When the oligarchy came, the Thirty sent for me, with four others, to the Council-Chamber,[1] and ordered us to bring over Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, that they might put him to death. They were in the habit of frequently giving similar orders to many others, wishing to implicate as many men as possible in their crimes. But then I again proved, not by mere words, but by my actions, that, if I may use a vulgar expression, I do not care a straw for death; but that I do care very much indeed about not doing anything against the laws of God or man.

[1] A building where the Prytanes had their meals and sacrificed.

That government with all its power did not terrify me into doing anything wrong; but when we left the Council-Chamber, the other four went over to Salamis, and brought Leon across to Athens; and I went away home: and if the rule of the Thirty had not been destroyed soon afterwards, I should very likely have been put to death for what I did then. Many of you will be my witnesses in this matter.

Now do you think that I should have re- XXI.
mained alive all these years, if I had taken part in public affairs, and had always maintained the cause of justice like an honest man, and had held it a paramount duty, as it is, to do so? Certainly not, Athenians, nor any other man either. But throughout my whole life, 33.
both in private, and in public, whenever I have had to take part in public affairs, you will find that I have never yielded a single point in a question of right and wrong to any man; no, not to those whom my enemies falsely assert to have been my pupils.[1] But I was never any man's teacher. I have never withheld myself from any one, young or old, who was anxious to hear me converse while I was about my mission; neither do I converse for payment, and refuse to converse without payment: I am ready to ask questions of rich and poor alike, and if any man wishes to answer me, and then listen to what I have to say, he may. And I cannot justly be charged with causing

[1] The reference is specially to Critias, the leading man in the Oligarchy of Thirty, and to Alcibiades.

these men to turn out good or bad citizens: for I never either taught, or professed to teach any of them any knowledge whatever. And if any man asserts that he ever learnt or heard any thing from me in private, which every one else did not hear as well as he, be sure that he does not speak the truth.

XXII. Why is it, then, that people delight in spending so much time in my company? You have heard why, Athenians. I told you the whole truth when I said that they delight in hearing me examine persons who think that they are wise when they are not wise. It is certainly very amusing to listen to that. And, I say, God has commanded me to examine men in oracles, and in dreams, and in every way in which the divine will was ever declared to man. This is the truth, Athenians, and if it were not the truth, it would be easily refuted. For if it were really the case that I have already corrupted some of the young men, and am now corrupting others, surely some of them, finding as they grew older that I had given them evil counsel in their youth, would have come forward to-day to accuse me and take their revenge. Or if they were unwilling to do so themselves, surely their kinsmen, their fathers, or brothers, or other relatives, would, if I had done them any harm, have remembered it, and taken their revenge. Certainly I see many of them in Court. Here is Crito, of my own deme and of my own age, the father of Critobulus; here is Lysanias of Sphettus, the father of Æschinus:

here is also Antiphon of Cephisus, the father of Epigenes. Then here are others, whose brothers have spent their time in my company; Nicostratus, the son of Theozotides, and brother of Theodotus—and Theodotus is dead, so he at least cannot entreat his brother to be silent: here is Paralus, the son of Demodocus, and the brother of Theages: here is Adeimantus, 34.
the son of Ariston, whose brother is Plato here: and Æantodorus, whose brother is Aristodorus. And I can name many others to you, some of whom Meletus ought to have called as witnesses in the course of his own speech: but if he forgot to call them then, let him call them now—I will stand aside while he does so—and tell us if he has any such evidence. No, on the contrary, my friends, you will find all these men ready to support me, the corrupter, the injurer of their kindred, as Meletus and Anytus call me. Those of them who have been already corrupted might perhaps have some reason for supporting me: but what reason can their relatives, who are grown up, and who are uncorrupted, have, except the reason of truth and justice, that they know very well that Meletus is a liar, and that I am speaking the truth?

Well, my friends, this, together it may be XXIII.
with other things of the same nature, is pretty much what I have to say in my defence. There may be some one among you who will be vexed when he remembers how, even in a less important trial than this, he prayed and

entreated the judges to acquit him with many tears, and brought forward his children and many of his friends and relatives in Court, in order to appeal to your feelings; and then finds that I shall do none of these things, though I am in what he would think the supreme danger. Perhaps he will harden himself against me when he notices this: it may make him angry, and he may give his vote in anger. If it is so with any of you—I do not suppose that it is, but in case it should be so—I think that I should answer him reasonably if I said: 'My friend, I have kinsmen too, for, in the words of Homer,[1] "I am not born of stocks and stones," but of woman;' and so, Athenians, I have kinsmen, and I have three sons, one of them a lad, and the other two still children. Yet I will not bring any of them forward before you, and implore you to acquit me. And why will I do none of these things? It is not from arrogance, Athenians, nor because I hold you cheap: whether or no I can face death bravely is another question: but for my own credit, and for your credit, and for the credit of our city, I do not think it well, at my age, and with my name, to do anything of that kind. Rightly or wrongly, men have made up their minds that in some way Socrates is different
35. from the mass of mankind. And it will be a shameful thing if those of you who are thought to excel in wisdom, or in bravery, or in any other virtue, are going to act in this fashion. I have

[1] *Od.* xix. 163.

often seen men with a reputation behaving in a strange way at their trial, as if they thought it a terrible fate to be killed, and as though they expected to live for ever, if you did not put them to death. Such men seem to me to bring discredit on the city: for any stranger would suppose that the best and most eminent Athenians, who are selected by their fellow-citizens to hold office, and for other honours, are no better than women. Those of you, Athenians, who have any reputation at all, ought not to do these things: and you ought not to allow us to do them: you should show that you will be much more merciless to men who make the city ridiculous by these pitiful pieces of acting, than to men who remain quiet.

But apart from the question of credit, my XXIV.
friends, I do not think that it is right to entreat the judge to acquit us, or to escape condemnation in that way. It is our duty to convince his mind by reason. He does not sit to give away justice to his friends, but to pronounce judgment: and he has sworn not to favour any man whom he would like to favour, but to decide questions according to law. And therefore we ought not to teach you to forswear yourselves; and you ought not to allow yourselves to be taught, for then neither you nor we would be acting righteously. Therefore, Athenians, do not require me to do these things, for I believe them to be neither good nor just nor holy; and, more especially do not ask me to do them to-day, when Meletus

is prosecuting me for impiety. For were I to be successful, and to prevail on you by my prayers to break your oaths, I should be clearly teaching you to believe that there are no gods; and I should be simply accusing myself by my defence of not believing in them. But, Athenians, that is very far from the truth. I do believe in the gods as no one of my accusers believes in them: and to you and to God I commit my cause to be decided as is best for you and for me.

(*He is found guilty by 281 votes to 220.*)

XXV. 36. I am not vexed at the verdict which you have given, Athenians, for many reasons. I expected that you would find me guilty; and I am not so much surprised at that, as at the numbers of the votes. I, certainly, never thought that the majority against me would have been so narrow. But now it seems that if only thirty votes had changed sides, I should have escaped. So I think that I have escaped Meletus, as it is: and not only have I escaped him; for it is perfectly clear that if Anytus and Lycon had not come forward to accuse me too, he would not have obtained the fifth part of the votes, and would have had to pay a fine of a thousand drachmæ.[1]

[1] Any prosecutor who did not obtain the votes of one-fifth of the dicasts or judges, incurred a fine of 1000 drachmæ, and certain other disabilities. Cf. *Dict. Antiq.* s.v. γραφή.

So he proposes death as the penalty. Be XXVI.
it so. And what counter-penalty shall I propose to you, Athenians? What I deserve, of course, must I not? What then do I deserve to pay or to suffer for having determined not to spend my life in ease? I neglected the things which most men value, such as wealth, and family interests, and military commands, and popular oratory, and all the political appointments, and clubs, and factions, that there are in Athens; for I thought that I was really too conscientious a man to preserve my life if I engaged in these matters. So I did not go where I should have done no good either to you or to myself. I went instead to each one of you by himself, to do him, as I say, the greatest of services, and strove to persuade him not to think of his affairs, until he had thought of himself, and tried to make himself as perfect and wise as possible; nor to think of the affairs of Athens, until he had thought of Athens herself; and in all cases to bestow his thoughts on things in the same manner. Then what do I deserve for such a life? Something good, Athenians, if I am really to propose what I deserve; and something good which it would be suitable to me to receive. Then what is a suitable reward to be given to a poor benefactor, who requires leisure to exhort you? There is no reward, Athenians, so suitable for him as a public maintenance in the Prytaneum. It is a much more suitable reward for him than for any of

you who has won a victory at the Olympic games with his horse or his chariots. Such a man only makes you seem happy, but I make you really happy: and he is not in want, and I am. So if I am to propose the penalty
37. which I really deserve, I propose this, a public maintenance in the Prytaneum.

XXVII. Perhaps you think me stubborn and arrogant in what I am saying now, as in what I said about the entreaties and tears. It is not so, Athenians; it is rather that I am convinced that I never wronged any man intentionally, though I cannot persuade you of that, for we have conversed together only a little time. If there were a law at Athens, as there is elsewhere, not to finish a trial of life and death in a single day, I think that I could have convinced you of it: but now it is not easy in so short a time to clear myself of the gross calumnies of my enemies. But when I am convinced that I have never wronged any man, I shall certainly not wrong myself, or admit that I deserve to suffer any evil, or propose any evil for myself as a penalty. Why should I? Lest I should suffer the penalty which Meletus proposes, when I say that I do not know whether it is a good or an evil? Shall I choose instead of it something which I know to be an evil, and propose that as a penalty? Shall I propose imprisonment? And why should I pass the rest of my days in prison, the slave of successive officials? Or shall I propose a fine, with imprisonment until it is

paid? I have told you why I will not do that. I should have to remain in prison for I have no money to pay a fine with. Shall I then propose exile? Perhaps you would agree to that. Life would indeed be very dear to me, if I were unreasonable enough to expect that strangers would cheerfully tolerate my discussions and reasonings, when you who are my fellow-citizens cannot endure them, and have found them so burdensome and odious to you, that you are seeking now to be released from them. No, indeed, Athenians, that is not likely. A fine life I should lead for an old man, if I were to withdraw from Athens, and pass the rest of my days in wandering from city to city, and continually being expelled. For I know very well that the young men will listen to me, wherever I go, as they do here; and if I drive them away, they will persuade their elders to expel me: and if I do not drive them away, their fathers and kinsmen will expel me for their sakes.

Perhaps some one will say, 'Why cannot XXVIII.
you withdraw from Athens, Socrates, and hold your peace?' It is the most difficult thing in the world to make you understand why I cannot do that. If I say that I cannot hold my peace, because that would be to disobey God, you will think that I am not in earnest and will not believe me. And if I tell you that no 38.
better thing can happen to a man than to converse every day about virtue and the other matters about which you have heard me con-

versing and examining myself and others, and that an unexamined life is not worth living, then you will believe me still less. But that is the truth, my friends, though it is not easy to convince you of it. And, what is more, I am not accustomed to think that I deserve any punishment. If I had been rich, I would have proposed as large a fine as I could pay: that would have done me no harm. But I am not rich enough to pay a fine, unless you are willing to fix it at a sum within my means. Perhaps I could pay you a mina:[1] so I propose that. Plato here, Athenians, and Crito, and Critobulus, and Apollodorus bid me propose thirty minæ, and they will be sureties for me. So I propose thirty minæ. They will be sufficient sureties to you for the money.

(*He is condemned to death.*)

XXIX. You have not gained very much time, Athenians, and, as the price of it, you will have an evil name from all who wish to revile the city, and they will cast in your teeth that you put Socrates, a wise man, to death. For they will certainly call me wise, whether I am wise or not, when they want to reproach you. If you would have waited for a little while, your wishes would have been fulfilled in the course of nature; for you see that I am an old man, far advanced in years, and near to death. I am speaking not to all of you, only to those who have voted for my death. And now I am

[1] A mina was equivalent then to £4 : 1 : 3.

speaking to them still. Perhaps, my friends, you think that I have been defeated because I was wanting in the arguments by which I could have persuaded you to acquit me, if, that is, I had thought it right to do or to say anything to escape punishment. It is not so. I have been defeated because I was wanting, not in arguments, but in overboldness and effrontery: because I would not plead before you as you would have liked to hear me plead, or appeal to you with weeping and wailing, or say and do many other things, which I maintain are unworthy of me, but which you have been accustomed to from other men. But when I was defending myself, I thought that I ought not to do anything unmanly because of the danger which I ran, and I have not changed my mind now. I would very much rather defend myself as I did, and die, than as you would have had me do, and live. Both in a law suit, and in war, there are some things which neither I nor any other man may do in 39a order to escape from death. In battle a man often sees that he may at least escape from death by throwing down his arms and falling on his knees before the pursuer to beg for his life. And there are many other ways of avoiding death in every danger, if a man will not scruple to say and to do anything. But, my friends, I think that it is a much harder thing to escape from wickedness than from death; for wickedness is swifter than death. And now I, who am old and slow, have been overtaken

by the slower pursuer: and my accusers, who are clever and swift, have been overtaken by the swifter pursuer, which is wickedness. And now I shall go hence, sentenced by you to death; and they will go hence, sentenced by truth to receive the penalty of wickedness and evil. And I abide by this award as well as they. Perhaps it was right for these things to be so: and I think that they are fairly measured.

XXX. And now I wish to prophesy to you, Athenians who have condemned me. For I am going to die, and that is the time when men have most prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who have sentenced me to death, that a far severer punishment than you have inflicted on me, will surely overtake you as soon as I am dead. You have done this thing, thinking that you will be relieved from having to give an account of your lives. But I say that the result will be very different from that. There will be more men who will call you to account, whom I have held back, and whom you did not see. And they will be harder masters to you than I have been, for they will be younger, and you will be more angry with them. For if you think that you will restrain men from reproaching you for your evil lives by putting them to death, you are very much mistaken. That way of escape is hardly possible, and it is not a good one. It is much better, and much easier, not to silence reproaches, but to make yourselves as perfect as you can. This is my

parting prophecy to you who have condemned me.

With you who have acquitted me I should XXXI.
like to converse touching this thing that has come to pass, while the authorities are busy, and before I go to the place where I have to die. So, I pray you, remain with me until I go hence: there is no reason why we should not converse with each other while it is possible. I wish to explain to you, as my friends, the 40.
meaning of what has befallen me. A wonderful thing has happened to me, judges—for you I am right in calling judges.[1] The prophetic sign, which I am wont to receive from the divine voice, has been constantly with me all through my life till now, opposing me in quite small matters if I were not going to act rightly. And now you yourselves see what has happened to me; a thing which might be thought, and which is sometimes actually reckoned, the supreme evil. But the sign of God did not withstand me when I was leaving my house in the morning, nor when I was coming up hither to the Court, nor at any point in my speech, when I was going to say anything: though at other times it has often stopped me in the very act of speaking. But now, in this matter, it has never once withstood me, either in my words or my actions. I will tell you what I believe to be the reason of that. This thing that has come upon me must be a good: and those

[1] The form of address hitherto has always been 'Athenians,' or 'my friends' (ἄνδρες).

of us who think that death is an evil must needs be mistaken. I have a clear proof that that is so; for my accustomed sign would certainly have opposed me, if I had not been going to fare well.

XXXII. And if we reflect in another way we shall see that we may well hope that death is a good. For the state of death is one of two things: either the dead man wholly ceases to be, and loses all sensation; or, according to the common belief, it is a change and a migration of the soul unto another place. And if death is the absence of all sensation, and like the sleep of one whose slumbers are unbroken by any dreams, it will be a wonderful gain. For if a man had to select that night in which he slept so soundly that he did not even see any dreams, and had to compare with it all the other nights and days of his life, and then had to say how many days and nights in his life he had spent better and more pleasantly than this night, I think that a private person, nay, even the great King[1] himself, would find them easy to count, compared with the others. If that is the nature of death, I for one count it a gain. For then it appears that eternity is nothing more than a single night. But if death is a journey to another place, and the common belief be true, that there are all who have died, what good could be greater than this, my judges? Would a journey not be worth taking, at the end of which, in the other world, we should be released

[1] Of Persia.

from the self-styled judges who are here, and 41.
should find the true judges, who are said to sit in judgment below, such as Minos, and Rhadamanthus, and Æacus, and Triptolemus, and the other demi-gods who were just in their lives? Or what would you not give to converse with Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? I am willing to die many times, if this be true. And for my own part I should have a wonderful interest in meeting there Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and the other men of old who have died through an unjust judgment, and in comparing my experiences with theirs. That I think would be no small pleasure. And, above all, I could spend my time in examining those who are there, as I examine men here, and in finding out which of them is wise, and which of them thinks himself wise, when he is not wise. What would we not give, my judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great expedition against Troy, or Odysseus, or Sisyphus, or countless other men and women whom we could name? It would be an infinite happiness to converse with them, and to live with them, and to examine them. Assuredly there they do not put men to death for doing that. For besides the other ways in which they are happier than we are, they are immortal, at least if the common belief be true.

And you too, judges, must face death with a XXXIII.
good courage, and believe this as a truth, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life,

or after death. His fortunes are not neglected by the gods; and what has come to me to-day has not come by chance. I am persuaded that it was better for me to die now, and to be released from trouble: and that was the reason why the sign never turned me back. And so I am hardly angry with my accusers, or with those who have condemned me to die. Yet it was not with this mind that they accused me and condemned me, but meaning to do me an injury. So far I may find fault with them.

Yet I have one request to make of them. When my sons grow up, visit them with punishment, my friends, and vex them in the same way that I have vexed you, if they seem to you to care for riches, or for any other thing, before virtue: and if they think that they are something, when they are nothing at all, reproach them, as I have reproached you, for not caring for what they should, and for thinking that they are great men when in fact they are worthless. And if you will do this, I myself and my sons will have received our deserts at your hands.

But now the time has come, and we must go hence; I to die, and you to live. Whether life or death is better is known to God, and to God only.

CRITO

CHARACTERS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES.

CRITO.

SCENE.—The prison of Socrates.

CRITO.

Socr. Why have you come at this hour, Crito? Is it not still early? CHAP. I. Steph. p. 43.

Crito. Yes, very early.

Socr. About what time is it?

Crito. It is just day-break.

Socr. I wonder that the jailor was willing to let you in.

Crito. He knows me now, Socrates, I come here so often; and besides, I have done him a service.

Socr. Have you been here long?

Crito. Yes; some time.

Socr. Then why did you sit down without speaking? why did you not wake me at once?

Crito. Indeed, Socrates, I wish that I myself were not so sleepless and sorrowful. But I have been wondering to see how sweetly you sleep. And I purposely did not wake you, for I was anxious not to disturb your repose. Often before, all through your life, I have thought that your temper was a happy one; and I think so more than ever now, when I see how easily and calmly you bear the calamity that has come to you.

Socr. Nay, Crito, it would be absurd if at my age I were angry at having to die.

Crito. Other men as old are overtaken by similar calamities, Socrates; but their age does not save them from being angry with their fate.

Socr. That is so: but tell me, why are you here so early?

Crito. I am the bearer of bitter news, Socrates: not bitter, it seems, to you; but to me, and to all your friends, both bitter and grievous: and to none of them, I think, is it more grievous than to me.

Socr. What is it? Has the ship come from Delos, at the arrival of which I am to die?

Crito. No, it has not actually arrived: but I think that it will be here to-day, from the news which certain persons have brought from Sunium, who left it there. It is clear from their news that it will be here to-day; and then, Socrates, to-morrow your life will have to end.

II. *Socr.* Well, Crito, may it end fortunately. Be it so, if so the gods will. But I do not
44. think that the ship will be here to-day.

Crito. Why do you suppose not?

Socr. I will tell you. I am to die on the day after the ship arrives, am I not?

Crito. That is what the authorities say.

Socr. Then I do not think that it will come to-day, but to-morrow. I judge from a certain dream which I saw a little while ago in the night: so it seems to be fortunate that you did not wake me.

Crito. And what was this dream?

Socr. A fair and comely woman, clad in white garments, seemed to come to me, and call me and say, "O Socrates—

'The third day hence shalt thou fair Phthia reach.'"[1]

Crito. What a strange dream, Socrates!

Socr. But its meaning is clear; at least to me, Crito.

Crito. Yes, too clear, it seems. But, O my III.
good Socrates, I beseech you for the last time to listen to me and save yourself. For to me your death will be more than a single disaster: not only shall I lose a friend the like of whom I shall never find again, but many persons, who do not know you and me well, will think that I might have saved you if I had been willing to spend money, but that I neglected to do so. And what character could be more disgraceful than the character of caring more for money than for one's friends? The world will never believe that we were anxious to save you, but that you yourself refused to escape.

Socr. But, my excellent Crito, why should we care so much about the opinion of the world? The best men, of whose opinion it is worth our while to think, will believe that we acted as we really did.

Crito. But you see, Socrates, that it is necessary to care about the opinion of the world too. This very thing that has happened to you proves that the multitude can do a man not the least,

[1] Hom. *Il.* ix. 363.

but almost the greatest harm, if he be falsely accused to them.

Socr. I wish that the multitude were able to do a man the greatest harm, Crito, for then they would be able to do him the greatest good too. That would have been well. But, as it is, they can do neither. They cannot make a man either wise or foolish: they act wholly at random.

IV. *Crito.* Well, be it so. But tell me this, Socrates. You surely are not anxious about me and your other friends, and afraid lest, if you escape, the informers should say that we stole you away, and get us into trouble, and involve us in a great deal of expense, or perhaps in the loss of all our property, and, it may be, bring some other punishment upon us besides? If
45. you have any fear of that kind, dismiss it. For of course we are bound to run those risks, and still greater risks than those if necessary, in saving you. So do not, I beseech you, refuse to listen to me.

Socr. I am anxious about that, Crito, and about much besides.

Crito. Then have no fear on that score. There are men who, for no very large sum, are ready to bring you out of prison into safety. And then, you know, these informers are cheaply bought, and there would be no need to spend much upon them. My fortune is at your service, and I think that it is sufficient: and if you have any feeling about making use of my money, there are strangers in Athens, whom you know, ready to use theirs; and one of them, Simmias

of Thebes, has actually brought enough for this very purpose. And Cebes and many others are ready too. And therefore, I repeat, do not shrink from saving yourself on that ground. And do not let what you said in the Court, that if you went into exile you would not know what to do with yourself, stand in your way; for there are many places for you to go to, where you will be welcomed. If you choose to go to Thessaly, I have friends there who will make much of you, and shelter you from any annoyance from the people of Thessaly.

And besides, Socrates, I think that you will V.
be doing what is wrong, if you abandon your life when you might preserve it. You are simply playing the game of your enemies; it is exactly the game of those who wanted to destroy you. And what is more, to me you seem to be abandoning your children too: you will leave them to take their chance in life, as far as you are concerned, when you might bring them up and educate them. Most likely their fate will be the usual fate of children who are left orphans. But you ought not to beget children unless you mean to take the trouble of bringing them up and educating them. It seems to me that you are choosing the easy way, and not the way of a good and brave man, as you ought, when you have been talking all your life long of the value that you set upon virtue. For my part, I feel ashamed both for you, and for us who are your friends. Men will think that the whole of this thing which has happened to you

—your appearance in court to take your trial, when you need not have appeared at all; the very way in which the trial was conducted; and then lastly this, for the crowning absurdity of the whole affair, is due to our cowardice. It will look as if we had shirked the danger out of
46. miserable cowardice; for we did not save you, and you did not save yourself, when it was quite possible to do so, if we had been good for anything at all. Take care, Socrates, lest these things be not evil only, but also dishonourable to you and to us. Consider then; or rather the time for consideration is past; we must resolve; and there is only one plan possible. Everything must be done to-night. If we delay any longer, we are lost. O Socrates, I implore you not to refuse to listen to me.

VI. *Socr.* My dear Crito, if your anxiety to save me be right, it is most valuable: but if it be not right, its greatness makes it all the more dangerous. We must consider then whether we are to do as you say, or not; for I am still what I always have been, a man who will listen to no voice but the voice of the reasoning which on consideration I find to be truest. I cannot cast aside my former arguments because this misfortune has come to me. They seem to me to be as true as ever they were, and I hold exactly the same ones in honour and esteem as I used to: and if we have no better reasoning to substitute for them, I certainly shall not agree to your proposal, not even though the power of the multitude should scare us with fresh terrors, as

children are scared with hobgoblins, and inflict upon us new fines, and imprisonments, and deaths. How then shall we most fitly examine the question? Shall we go back first to what you say about the opinions of men, and ask if we used to be right in thinking that we ought to pay attention to some opinions, and not to others? Used we to be right in saying so before I was condemned to die, and has it now become apparent that we were talking at random, and arguing for the sake of argument, and that it was really nothing but play and nonsense? I am anxious, Crito, to examine our former reasoning with your help, and to see whether my present position will appear to me to have affected its truth in any way, or not; and whether we are to set it aside, or to yield assent to it. Those of us who thought at all seriously, used always to say, I think, exactly what I said just now, namely, that we ought to esteem some of the opinions which men form highly, and not others. Tell me, Crito, if you please, do you not think that they were right? For you, 47.
humanly speaking, will not have to die to-morrow, and your judgment will not be biassed by that circumstance. Consider then: do you not think it reasonable to say that we should not esteem all the opinions of men, but only some, nor the opinions of all men, but only of some men? What do you think? Is not this true?

Crito. It is.

Socr. And we should esteem the good opinions, and not the worthless ones?

Crito. Yes.

Socr. But the good opinions are those of the wise, and the worthless ones those of the foolish?

Crito. Of course.

VII. *Socr.* And what used we to say about this? Does a man who is in training, and who is in earnest about it, attend to the praise and blame and opinion of all men, or of the one man only who is a doctor or a trainer?

Crito. He attends only to the opinion of the one man.

Socr. Then he ought to fear the blame and welcome the praise of this one man, not of the many?

Crito. Clearly.

Socr. Then he must act and exercise, and eat and drink in whatever way the one man who is his master, and who understands the matter, bids him; not as others bid him?

Crito. That is so.

Socr. Good. But if he disobeys this one man, and disregards his opinion and his praise, and esteems instead what the many, who understand nothing of the matter, say, will he not suffer for it?

Crito. Of course he will.

Socr. And how will he suffer? In what direction, and in what part of himself?

Crito. Of course in his body. That is disabled.

Socr. You are right. And, Crito, to be brief, is it not the same, in everything? And,

therefore, in questions of right and wrong, and of the base and the honourable, and of good and evil, which we are now considering, ought we to follow the opinion of the many and fear that, or the opinion of the one man who understands these matters (if we can find him), and feel more shame and fear before him than before all other men? For if we do not follow him, we shall cripple and maim that part of us which, we used to say, is improved by right and disabled by wrong. Or is this not so?

Crito. No, Socrates, I agree with you.

Socr. Now, if, by listening to the opinions VIII
of those who do not understand, we disable that part of us which is improved by health and crippled by disease, is our life worth living, when it is crippled? It is the body, is it not?

Crito. Yes.

Socr. Is life worth living with the body crippled and in a bad state?

Crito. No, certainly not.

Socr. Then is life worth living when that part of us which is maimed by wrong and benefited by right is crippled? Or do we consider that part of us, whatever it is, which has to do with right and wrong to be of less con- 48.
sequence than our body?

Crito. No, certainly not.

Socr. But more valuable?

Crito. Yes, much more so.

Socr. Then, my excellent friend, we must not think so much of what the many will say of us; we must think of what the one man,

who understands right and wrong, and of what Truth herself will say of us. And so you are mistaken to begin with, when you invite us to regard the opinion of the multitude concerning the right and the honourable and the good, and their opposites. But, it may be said, the multitude can put us to death?

Crito. Yes, that is evident. That may be said, Socrates.

Socr. True. But, my excellent friend, to me it appears that the conclusion which we have just reached, is the same as our conclusion of former times. Now consider whether we still hold to the belief, that we should set the highest value, not on living, but on living well?

Crito. Yes, we do.

Socr. And living well and honourably and rightly mean the same thing: do we hold to that or not?

Crito. We do.

IX. *Socr.* Then, starting from these premises, we have to consider whether it is right or not right for me to try to escape from prison, without the consent of the Athenians. If we find that it is right, we will try: if not, we will let it alone. I am afraid that considerations of expense, and of reputation, and of bringing up my children, of which you talk, Crito, are only the reflections of our friends, the many, who lightly put men to death, and who would, if they could, as lightly bring them to life again, without a thought. But reason, which is our

guide, shows us that we can have nothing to consider but the question which I asked just now: namely, shall we be doing right if we give money and thanks to the men who are to aid me in escaping, and if we ourselves take our respective parts in my escape? Or shall we in truth be doing wrong, if we do all this? And if we find that we should be doing wrong, then we must not take any account either of death, or of any other evil that may be the consequence of remaining quietly here, but only of doing wrong.

Crito. I think that you are right, Socrates. But what are we to do?

Socr. Let us consider that together, my good sir, and if you can contradict anything that I say, do so, and I will be convinced: but if you cannot, do not go on repeating to me any longer, my dear friend, that I should escape without the consent of the Athenians. I am very anxious to act with your approval:[1] I do not want you to think me mistaken. But now tell me if you agree with the doctrine from which I start, and try to answer my questions as you think best. 49

Crito. I will try.

Socr. Ought we never to do wrong intentionally at all; or may we do wrong in some ways, and not in others? Or, as we have often agreed in former times, is it never either good or honourable to do wrong? Have all our former conclusions been forgotten in these few X.

[1] Reading *πείσας.*

days? Old men as we were, Crito, did we not see, in days gone by, when we were gravely conversing with each other, that we were no better than children? Or is not what we used to say most assuredly the truth, whether the world agrees with us or not? Is not wrong-doing an evil and a shame to the wrong-doer in every case, whether we incur a heavier or a lighter punishment than death as the consequence of doing right? Do we believe that?

Crito. We do.

Socr. Then we ought never to do wrong at all?

Crito. Certainly not.

Socr. Neither, if we ought never to do wrong at all, ought we to repay wrong with wrong, as the world thinks we may?

Crito. Clearly not.

Socr. Well then, Crito, ought we to do evil to any one?

Crito. Certainly I think not, Socrates.

Socr. And is it right to repay evil with evil, as the world thinks, or not right?

Crito. Certainly it is not right.

Socr. For there is no difference, is there, between doing evil to a man, and wronging him?

Crito. True.

Socr. Then we ought not to repay wrong with wrong or do harm to any man, no matter what we may have suffered from him. And in conceding this, Crito, be careful that you do not concede more than you mean. For I know

that only a few men hold, or ever will hold this opinion. And so those who hold it, and those who do not, have no common ground of argument ; they can of necessity only look with contempt on each other's belief. Do you therefore consider very carefully whether you agree with me and share my opinion. Are we to start in our inquiry from the doctrine that it is never right either to do wrong, or to repay wrong with wrong, or to avenge ourselves on any man who harms us, by harming him in return? Or do you disagree with me and dissent from my principle? I myself have believed in it for a long time, and I believe in it still. But if you differ in any way, explain to me how. If you still hold to our former opinion, listen to my next point.

Crito. Yes, I hold to it, and I agree with you. Go on.

Socr. Then, my next point, or rather my next question, is this: Ought a man to perform his just agreements, or may he shuffle out of them?

Crito. He ought to perform them.

Socr. Then consider. If I escape without XI.
the state's consent, shall I be injuring those 50.
whom I ought least to injure, or not? Shall I be abiding by my just agreements or not?

Crito. I cannot answer your question, Socrates. I do not understand it.

Socr. Consider it in this way. Suppose the laws and the commonwealth were to come and appear to me as I was preparing to run away

(if that is the right phrase to describe my escape) and were to ask, 'Tell us, Socrates, what have you in your mind to do? What do you mean by trying to escape, but to destroy us the laws, and the whole city, so far as in you lies? Do you think that a state can exist and not be overthrown, in which the decisions of law are of no force, and are disregarded and set at nought by private individuals?' How shall we answer questions like that, Crito? Much might be said, especially by an orator, in defence of the law which makes judicial decisions supreme. Shall I reply, 'But the state has injured me: it has decided my cause wrongly.' Shall we say that?

Crito. Certainly we will, Socrates.

XII. *Socr.* And suppose the laws were to reply, 'Was that our agreement? or was it that you would submit to whatever judgments the state should pronounce?' And if we were to wonder at their words, perhaps they would say, 'Socrates, wonder not at our words, but answer us; you yourself are accustomed to ask questions and to answer them. What complaint have you against us and the city, that you are trying to destroy us? Are we not, first, your parents? Through us your father took your mother and begat you. Tell us, have you any fault to find with those of us that are the laws of marriage?' 'I have none,' I should reply. 'Or have you any fault to find with those of us that regulate the nurture and education of the child, which you, like others, received? Did not we do well in

bidding your father educate you in music and gymnastic?' 'You did,' I should say. 'Well then, since you were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us, how, in the first place, can you deny that you are our child and our slave, as your fathers were before you? And if this be so, do you think that your rights are on a level with ours? Do you think that you have a right to retaliate upon us if we should try to do anything to you. You had not the same rights that your father had, or that your master would have had, if you had been a slave. You had no right to retaliate upon them if they ill-treated you, or to answer them if they reviled you, or to strike them 51
back if they struck you, or to repay them evil with evil in any way. And do you think that you may retaliate on your country and its laws? If we try to destroy you, because we think it right, will you in return do all that you can to destroy us, the laws, and your country, and say that in so doing you are doing right, you, the man, who in truth thinks so much of virtue? Or are you too wise to see that your country is worthier, and more august, and more sacred, and holier, and held in higher honour both by the gods and by all men of understanding, than your father and your mother and all your other ancestors; and that it is your bounden duty to reverence it, and to submit to it, and to approach it more humbly than you would approach your father, when it is angry with you; and either to do whatever it bids you to do or to persuade it to excuse you;

and to obey in silence if it orders you to endure stripes or imprisonment, or if it send you to battle to be wounded or to die? That is what is your duty. You must not give way, nor retreat, nor desert your post. In war, and in the court of justice, and everywhere, you must do whatever your city and your country bid you do, or you must convince them that their commands are unjust. But it is against the law of God to use violence to your father or to your mother; and much more so is it against the law of God to use violence to your country.' What answer shall we make, Crito? Shall we say that the laws speak truly, or not?

Crito. I think that they do.

XIII. *Socr.* 'Then consider, Socrates,' perhaps they would say, 'if we are right in saying that by attempting to escape you are attempting to injure us. We brought you into the world, we nurtured you, we educated you, we gave you and every other citizen a share of all the good things we could. Yet we proclaim that if any man of the Athenians is dissatisfied with us, he may take his goods and go away whithersoever he pleases: we give that permission to every man who chooses to avail himself of it, so soon as he has reached man's estate, and sees us, the laws, and the administration of our city. No one of us stands in his way or forbids him to take his goods and go wherever he likes, whether it be to an Athenian colony, or to any foreign country, if he is dissatisfied with us and with

the city. But we say that every man of you who remains here, seeing how we administer justice, and how we govern the city in other matters, has agreed, by the very fact of remaining here, to do whatsoever we bid him. And, we say, he who disobeys us, does a threefold wrong: he disobeys us who are his parents, and he disobeys us who fostered him, and he disobeys us after he has agreed to obey us, without persuading us that we are wrong. Yet we did not bid him sternly to do whatever we told him. We offered him an alternative; we gave 52.
him his choice, either to obey us, or to convince us that we were wrong: but he does neither.

'These are the charges, Socrates, to which XIV.
we say that you will expose yourself, if you do what you intend; and that not less, but more than other Athenians.' And if I were to ask, 'And why?' they might retort with justice that I have bound myself by the agreement with them more than other Athenians. They would say, 'Socrates, we have very strong evidence that you were satisfied with us and with the city. You would not have been content to stay at home in it more than other Athenians, unless you had been satisfied with it more than they. You never went away from Athens to the festivals, save once to the Isthmian games, nor elsewhere except on military service; you never made other journeys like other men; you had no desire to see other cities or other laws; you were contented with us and our city. So

strongly did you prefer us, and agree to be governed by us: and what is more, you begat children in this city, you found it so pleasant. And besides, if you had wished, you might at your trial have offered to go into exile. At that time you could have done with the state's consent, what you are trying now to do without it. But then you gloried in being willing to die. You said that you preferred death to exile. And now you are not ashamed of those words: you do not respect us the laws, for you are trying to destroy us: and you are acting just as a miserable slave would act, trying to run away, and breaking the covenant and agreement which you made to submit to our government. First, therefore, answer this question. Are we right, or are we wrong, in saying that you have agreed not in mere words, but in reality, to live under our government?' What are we to say, Crito? Must we not admit that it is true?

Crito. We must, Socrates.

Socr. Then they would say, 'Are you not breaking your covenants and agreements with us? And you were not led to make them by force or by fraud: you had not to make up your mind in a hurry. You had seventy years in which you might have gone away, if you had been dissatisfied with us, or if the agreement had seemed to you unjust. But you preferred neither Lacedæmon nor Crete, though you are fond of saying that they are well governed, nor any other state, either of the Hellenes, or the

Barbarians. You went away from Athens less 53.
than the lame and the blind and the cripple. Clearly you, far more than other Athenians, were satisfied with the city, and also with us who are its laws: for who would be satisfied with a city which had no laws? And now will you not abide by your agreement? If you take our advice, you will, Socrates: then you will not make yourself ridiculous by going away from Athens.

'For consider: what good will you do your- XV.
self or your friends by thus transgressing, and breaking your agreement? It is tolerably certain that they, on their part, will at least run the risk of exile, and of losing their civil rights, or of forfeiting their property. For yourself, you might go to one of the neighbouring cities, to Thebes or to Megara for instance—for both of them are well governed—but, Socrates, you will come as an enemy to these commonwealths; and all who care for their city will look askance at you, and think that you are a subverter of law. And you will confirm the judges in their opinion, and make it seem that their verdict was a just one. For a man who is a subverter of law, may well be supposed to be a corrupter of the young and thoughtless. Then will you avoid well-governed states and civilised men? Will life be worth having, if you do? Or will you consort with such men, and converse without shame—about what, Socrates? About the things which you talk of here? Will you tell them that virtue, and justice, and institutions,

and law are the most precious things that men can have? And do you not think that that will be a shameful thing in Socrates? You ought to think so. But you will leave these places; you will go to the friends of Crito in Thessaly: for there there is most disorder and licence: and very likely they will be delighted to hear of the ludicrous way in which you escaped from prison, dressed up in peasant's clothes, or in some other disguise which people put on when they are running away, and with your appearance altered. But will no one say how you, an old man, with probably only a few more years to live, clung so greedily to life that you dared to transgress the highest laws? Perhaps not, if you do not displease them. But if you do, Socrates, you will hear much that will make you blush. You will pass your life as the flatterer and the slave of all men; and what will you be doing but feasting in Thessaly? It will be as if you had made a journey to Thessaly for an entertainment. And where will be all our old sayings about justice and virtue then?

54. But you wish to live for the sake of your children? You want to bring them up and educate them? What? will you take them with you to Thessaly, and bring them up and educate them there? Will you make them strangers to their own country, that you may bestow this benefit on them too? Or supposing that you leave them in Athens, will they be brought up and educated better if you are alive, though you are not with them? Yes; your

friends will take care of them. Will your friends take care of them if you make a journey to Thessaly, and not if you make a journey to Hades? You ought not to think that, at least if those who call themselves your friends are good for anything at all.

'No, Socrates, be advised by us who have XVI. fostered you. Think neither of children, nor of life, nor of any other thing before justice, that when you come to the other world you may be able to make your defence before the rulers who sit in judgment there. It is clear that neither you nor any of your friends will be happier, or juster, or holier in this life, if you do this thing, nor will you be happier after you are dead. Now you will go away wronged, not by us, the laws, but by men. But if you repay evil with evil, and wrong with wrong in this shameful way, and break your agreements and covenants with us, and injure those whom you should least injure, yourself, and your friends, and your country, and us, and so escape, then we shall be angry with you while you live, and when you die our brethren, the laws in Hades, will not receive you kindly; for they will know that on earth you did all that you could to destroy us. Listen then to us, and let not Crito persuade you to do as he says.'

Know well, my dear friend Crito, that this XVII. is what I seem to hear, as the worshippers of Cybele seem, in their frenzy, to hear the music of flutes: and the sound of these words rings loudly in my ears, and drowns all other words.

And I feel sure that if you try to change my mind you will speak in vain; nevertheless, if you think that you will succeed, say on.

Crito. I can say no more, Socrates.

Socr. Then let it be, Crito: and let us do as I say, seeing that God so directs us.

PHÆDO

CHARACTERS OF THE DIALOGUE.

PHÆDO.

ECHECRATES.

SOCRATES.

CEBES.

SIMMIAS.

APOLLODORUS.

CRITO.

THE SERVANT OF THE ELEVEN.

SCENE.—First Phlius, then the Prison of Socrates.

PHÆDO

Echecrates. Were you with Socrates yourself, Phædo, on that day when he drank the poison in the prison, or did you hear the story from some one else? CHAP. I. Steph. p. 58.

Phædo. I was there myself, Echecrates.

Ech. Then what was it that our master said before his death, and how did he die? I should be very glad if you would tell me. None of our citizens go very much to Athens now; and no stranger has come from there for a long time, who could give us any definite account of these things, except that he drank the poison and died. We could learn nothing beyond that.

Phædo. Then have you not heard about the trial either, how that went?

Ech. Yes, we were told of that: and we were rather surprised to find that he did not die till so long after the trial. Why was that, Phædo?

Phædo. It was an accident, Echecrates. The stern of the ship, which the Athenians send to Delos, happened to have been crowned on the day before the trial.

Ech. And what is this ship?

Phædo. It is the ship, as the Athenians say, in which Theseus took the seven youths and the seven maidens to Crete, and saved them from death, and himself was saved. The Athenians made a vow then to Apollo, the story goes, to send a sacred mission to Delos every year, if they should be saved; and from that time to this they have always sent it to the god, every year. They have a law to keep the city pure as soon as the mission begins, and not to execute any sentence of death until the ship has returned from Delos; and sometimes, when it is detained by contrary winds, that is a long while. The sacred mission begins when the priest of Apollo crowns the stern of the ship: and, as I said, this happened to have been done on the day before the trial. That was why Socrates lay so long in prison between his trial and his death.

II. *Ech.* But tell me about his death, Phædo. What was said and done, and which of his friends were with our master? Or would not the authorities let them be there? Did he die alone?

Phædo. Oh, no: some of them were there, indeed several.

Ech. It would be very good of you, if you are not busy, to tell us the whole story as exactly as you can.

Phædo. No: I have nothing to do and I will try to relate it. Nothing is more pleasant to me than to recall Socrates to my mind, whether by speaking of him myself, or by listening to others.

Ech. Indeed, Phædo, you will have an audience like yourself. But try to tell us everything that happened as precisely as you can.

Phædo. Well, I myself was strangely moved on that day. I did not feel that I was being present at the death of a dear friend: I did not pity him, for he seemed to me happy, Echecrates, both in his bearing and in his words, so fearlessly and nobly did he die. I could not help thinking that the gods would watch over him still on his journey to the other world, and that when he arrived there it would be well with him, if it was ever well with any man. Therefore I had scarcely any feeling of 59.
pity, as you would expect at such a mournful time. Neither did I feel the pleasure which I usually felt at our philosophical discussions; for our talk was of philosophy. A very singular feeling came over me, a strange mixture of pleasure and of pain when I remembered that he was presently to die. All of us who were there were in much the same state, laughing and crying by turns; particularly Apollodorus. I think you know the man and his ways.

Ech. Of course I do.

Phædo. Well, he did not restrain himself at all; and I myself and the others were greatly agitated too.

Ech. Who were there, Phædo?

Phædo. Of native Athenians, there was this Apollodorus, and Critobulus, and his father Crito, and Hermogenes, and Epigenes, and Æschines, and Antisthenes. Then there was

Ctesippus the Pæanian, and Menexenus, and some other Athenians. Plato, I believe was ill.

Ech. Were any strangers there?

Phædo. Yes, there was Simmias of Thebes, and Cebes, and Phædondes; and Eucleides and Terpsion from Megara.

Ech. But Aristippus and Cleombrotus? were they present?

Phædo. No, they were not. They were said to be in Ægina.

Ech. Was any one else there?

Phædo. No, I think that these were all.

Ech. Then tell us about your conversation.

III. *Phædo.* I will try to relate the whole story to you from the beginning. On the previous days I and the others had always met in the morning at the court where the trial was held, which was close to the prison; and then we had gone in to Socrates. We used to wait each morning until the prison was opened, conversing: for it was not opened early. When it was opened we used to go in to Socrates, and we generally spent the whole day with him. But on that morning we met earlier than usual; for the evening before we had learnt, on leaving the prison, that the ship had arrived from Delos. So we arranged to be at the usual place as early as possible. When we reached the prison the porter, who generally let us in, came out to us and bade us wait a little, and not to go in until he summoned us himself; 'for the Eleven,' he said, 'are releasing Socrates from his fetters, and giving directions for his death to-day.' In

no great while he returned and bade us enter. So we went in and found Socrates just released, 60.
and Xanthippe—you know her—sitting by him, holding his child in her arms. When Xanthippe saw us, she wailed aloud, and cried, in her woman's way, 'This is the last time, Socrates, that you will talk with your friends, or they with you.' And Socrates glanced at Crito, and said, 'Crito, let her be taken home.' So some of Crito's servants led her away, weeping bitterly and beating her breast. But Socrates sat up on the bed, and bent his leg and rubbed it with his hand, and while he was rubbing it said to us, How strange a thing is what men call pleasure! How wonderful is its relation to pain, which seems to be the opposite of it! They will not come to a man together: but if he pursues the one and gains it, he is almost forced to take the other also, as if they were two distinct things united at one end. And I think, said he, that if Æsop had noticed them he would have composed a fable about them, to the effect that God had wished to reconcile them when they were quarrelling, and that, when he could not do that, he joined their ends together; and that therefore whenever the one comes to a man, the other is sure to follow. That is just the case with me. There was pain in my leg caused by the chains: and now, it seems, pleasure is come following the pain.

Cebes interrupted him and said, By the bye IV
Socrates, I am glad that you reminded me. Several people have been inquiring about your

poems, the hymn to Apollo, and Æsop's fables which you have put into metre, and only a day or two ago Evenus asked me what was your reason for writing poetry on coming here, when you had never written a line before. So if you wish me to be able to answer him when he asks me again, as I know that he will, tell me what to say.

Then tell him the truth, Cebes, he said. Say that it was from no wish to pose as a rival to him, or to his poems. I knew that it would not be easy to do that. I was only testing the meaning of certain dreams, and acquitting my conscience about them, in case they should be bidding me make this kind of music. The fact is this. The same dream used often to come to me in my past life, appearing in different forms at different times, but always saying the same words, 'Socrates, work at music and compose it.' Formerly I used to think that the dream was encouraging me and cheering me on in what
61. was already the work of my life, just as the spectators cheer on different runners in a race. I supposed that the dream was encouraging me to create the music at which I was working already: for I thought that philosophy was the highest music, and my life was spent in philosophy. But then, after the trial, when the feast of the god delayed my death, it occurred to me that the dream might possibly be bidding me create music in the popular sense, and that in that case I ought to do so, and not to disobey: I thought that it would be safer to acquit my

conscience by creating poetry in obedience to the dream before I departed. So first I composed a hymn to the god whose feast it was. And then I turned such fables of Æsop as I knew, and had ready to my hand, into verse, taking those which came first: for I reflected that a man who means to be a poet has to use fiction and not facts for his poems; and I could not invent fiction myself.

Tell Evenus this, Cebes, and bid him fare- V.
well from me; and tell him to follow me as quickly as he can, if he is wise. I, it seems, shall depart to-day, for that is the will of the Athenians.

And Simmias said, What strange advice to give Evenus, Socrates! I have often met him, and from what I have seen of him, I think that he is certainly not at all the man to take it, if he can help it.

What? he said, is not Evenus a philosopher?

Yes, I suppose so, replied Simmias.

Then Evenus will wish to die, he said, and so will every man who is worthy of having any part in this study. But he will not lay violent hands on himself; for that, they say, is wrong. And as he spoke he put his legs off the bed on to the ground, and remained sitting thus for the rest of the conversation.

Then Cebes asked him, What do you mean, Socrates, by saying that it is wrong for a man to lay violent hands on himself, but that the philosopher will wish to follow the dying man?

What, Cebes? Have you and Simmias been

with Philolaus, and not heard about these things?

Nothing very definite, Socrates.

Well, I myself only speak of them from hearsay: yet there is no reason why I should not tell you what I have heard. Indeed, as I am setting out on a journey to the other world, what could be more fitting for me than to talk about my journey, and to consider what we imagine to be its nature? How could we better employ the interval between this and sunset?

VI. Then what is their reason for saying that it is wrong for a man to kill himself, Socrates? It is quite true that I have heard Philolaus say, when he was living at Thebes, that it is not right; and I have heard the same thing from others too: but I never heard anything definite on the subject from any of them.

62. You must be of good cheer, said he, possibly you will hear something some day. But perhaps you will be surprised if I say that this law, unlike every other law to which mankind are subject, is absolute and without exception; and that it is not true that death is better than life only for some persons and at some times. And perhaps you will be surprised if I tell you that these men, for whom it would be better to die, may not do themselves a service, but that they must await a benefactor from without.

Oh indeed, said Cebes, laughing quietly, and speaking in his native dialect.

Indeed, said Socrates, so stated it may seem

strange: and yet perhaps a reason may be given for it. The reason which the secret teaching [1] gives, that man is in a kind of prison, and that he may not set himself free, nor escape from it, seems to me rather profound and not easy to fathom. But I do think, Cebes, that it is true that the gods are our guardians, and that we men are a part of their property. Do you not think so?

I do, said Cebes.

Well then, said he, if one of your possessions were to kill itself, though you had not signified that you wished it to die, should you not be angry with it? Should you not punish it, if punishment were possible?

Certainly, he replied.

Then in this way perhaps it is not unreasonable to hold that no man has a right to take his own life, but that he must wait until God sends some necessity upon him, as has now been sent upon me.

Yes, said Cebes, that does seem natural. VII.
But you were saying just now that the philosopher will desire to die. Is not that a paradox, Socrates, if what we have just been saying, that God is our guardian and that we are his property, be true. It is not reasonable to say that the wise man will be content to depart from this service, in which the gods, who are the best of all rulers, rule him. He will hardly think that when he becomes free he will take better care of himself than the gods take of him.

[1] The Esoteric system of the Pythagoreans.

A fool perhaps might think so, and say that he would do well to run away from his master: he might not consider that he ought not to run away from a good master, but that he ought to remain with him as long as possible, and so in his thoughtlessness he might run away. But the wise man will surely desire to remain always with one who is better than himself. But if this be true, Socrates, the reverse of what you said just now seems to follow. The wise man should grieve to die, and the fool should rejoice.

I thought Socrates was pleased with Cebes'
63. insistence. He looked at us, and said, Cebes is always examining arguments. He will not be convinced at once by anything that one says.

Yes, Socrates, said Simmias, but I do think that now there is something in what Cebes says. Why should really wise men want to run away from masters who are better than themselves, and lightly quit their service? And I think Cebes is aiming his argument at you, because you are so ready to leave us, and the gods, who are good rulers, as you yourself admit.

You are right, he said. I suppose you mean that I must defend myself against your charge, as if I were in a court of justice.

That is just our meaning, said Simmias.

VIII. Well then, he replied, let me try to make a more successful defence to you than I did to the judges at my trial. I should be wrong, Cebes and Simmias, he went on, not to grieve at death, if I did not think that I was going to live both with other gods who are good and

wise, and with men who have died, and who are better than the men of this world. But you must know that I hope that I am going to live among good men, though I am not quite sure of that. But I am as sure as I can be in such matters that I am going to live with gods who are very good masters. And therefore I am not so much grieved at death: I am confident that the dead have some kind of existence, and, as has been said of old, an existence that is far better for the good than for the wicked.

Well, Socrates, said Simmias, do you mean to go away and keep this belief to yourself, or will you let us share it with you? It seems to me that we too have an interest in this good. And it will also serve as your defence, if you can convince us of what you say.

I will try, he replied. But I think Crito has been wanting to speak to me. Let us first hear what he has to say.

Only, Socrates, said Crito, that the man who is going to give you the poison has been telling me to warn you not to talk much. He says that talking heats people, and that the action of the poison must not be counteracted by heat. Those who excite themselves sometimes have to drink it two or three times.

Let him be, said Socrates: let him mind his own business, and be prepared to give me the poison twice, or, if need be, thrice.

I knew that would be your answer, said Crito: but the man has been importunate.

Never mind him, he replied. But I wish

now to explain to you, my judges, why it seems to me that a man who has really spent his life in philosophy has reason to be of good cheer
64. when he is about to die, and may well hope after death to gain in the other world the greatest good. I will try to show you, Simmias and Cebes, how this may be.

IX. The world, perhaps, does not see that those who rightly engage in philosophy, study only dying and death. And, if this be true, it would be surely strange for a man all through his life to desire only death, and then, when death comes to him, to be vexed at it, when it has been his study and his desire for so long.

Simmias laughed, and said: Indeed, Socrates, you make me laugh, though I am scarcely in a laughing humour now. If the multitude heard that, I fancy they would think that what you say of philosophers is quite true; and my countrymen would entirely agree with you that philosophers are indeed eager to die, and they would say that they know full well that philosophers deserve to be put to death.

And they would be right, Simmias, except in saying that they know it. They do not know in what sense the true philosopher is eager to die, or what kind of death he deserves, or in what sense he deserves it. Let us dismiss them from our thoughts, and converse by ourselves. Do we believe death to be anything?

We do, replied Simmias.

And do we not believe it to be the separation of the soul from the body? Does not death

mean that the body comes to exist by itself, separated from the soul, and that the soul exists by herself, separated from the body? What is death but that?

It is that, he said.

Now consider, my good friend, if you and I are agreed on another point which I think will help us to understand the question better. Do you think that a philosopher will care very much about what are called pleasures, such as the pleasures of eating and drinking?

Certainly not, Socrates, said Simmias.

Or about the pleasures of sexual passion?

Indeed, no.

And, do you think that he holds the remaining cares of the body in high esteem? Will he think much of getting fine clothes, and sandals, and other bodily adornments, or will he despise them, except so far as he is absolutely forced to meddle with them?

The real philosopher, I think, will despise them, he replied.

In short, said he, you think that his studies are not concerned with the body? He stands aloof from it, as far as he can, and turns towards the soul?

I do.

Well then, in these matters, first, it is clear that the philosopher releases his soul from com- 65.
munion with the body, so far as he can, beyond all other men?

It is.

And does not the world think, Simmias, that

if a man has no pleasure in such things, and does not take his share in them, his life is not worth living? Do not they hold that he who thinks nothing of bodily pleasures is almost as good as dead?

Indeed you are right.

X. But what about the actual acquisition of wisdom? If the body is taken as a companion in the search for wisdom, is it a hindrance or not? For example, do sight and hearing convey any real truth to men? Are not the very poets for ever telling us that we neither hear nor see anything accurately? But if these senses of the body are not accurate or clear, the others will hardly be so, for they are all less perfect than these, are they not?

Yes, I think so, certainly, he said.

Then when does the soul attain truth? he asked. We see that, as often as she seeks to investigate anything in company with the body, the body leads her astray.

True.

Is it not by reasoning, if at all, that any real truth becomes manifest to her?

Yes.

And she reasons best, I suppose, when none of the senses, whether hearing, or sight, or pain, or pleasure, harasses her: when she has dismissed the body, and released herself as far as she can from all intercourse or contact with it, and so, coming to be as much alone with herself as is possible, strives after real truth.

That is so.

And here too the soul of the philosopher very greatly despises the body, and flies from it, and seeks to be alone by herself, does she not?

Clearly.

And what do you say to the next point, Simmias? Do we say that there is such a thing as absolute justice, or not?

Indeed we do.

And absolute beauty, and absolute good?

Of course.

Have you ever seen any of them with your eyes?

Indeed, I have not, he replied.

Did you ever grasp them with any bodily sense? I am speaking of all absolutes, whether size, or health, or strength; in a word of the essence or real being of everything. Is the very truth of things contemplated by the body? Is it not rather the case that the man, who prepares himself most carefully to apprehend by his intellect the essence of each thing which he examines, will come nearest to the knowledge of it?

Certainly.

And will not a man attain to this pure thought most completely, if he goes to each thing, as far as he can, with his mind alone, taking neither sight, nor any other sense along with his reason in the process of thought, to be an encumbrance? 66.
In every case he will pursue pure and absolute being, with his pure intellect alone. He will be set free as far as possible from the eye, and the ear, and, in short, from the whole body,

because intercourse with the body troubles the soul, and hinders her from gaining truth and wisdom. Is it not he who will attain the knowledge of real being, if any man will?

Your words are admirably true, Socrates, said Simmias.

XI. And, he said, must not all this cause real philosophers to reflect, and make them say to each other, It seems that there is a narrow path which will bring us safely to our journey's end, with reason as our guide. As long as we have this body, and an evil of that sort is mingled with our souls, we shall never fully gain what we desire; and that is truth. For the body is for ever taking up our time with the care which it needs: and, besides, whenever diseases attack it, they hinder us in our pursuit of real being. It fills us with passions, and desires, and fears, and all manner of phantoms, and much foolishness: and so, as the saying goes, in very truth we can never think at all for it. It alone, and its desires, cause wars and factions and battles: for the origin of all wars is the pursuit of wealth,[1] and we are forced to pursue wealth because we live in slavery to the cares of the body. And therefore, for all these reasons, we have no leisure for philosophy. And last of all, if we ever are free from the body for a time, and then turn to examine some matter, it falls in our way at every step of the inquiry, and causes confusion and trouble and panic, so that we cannot see the truth for it. Verily we have learnt that

[1] Cf. *Rep.* 373 D.

if we are to have any pure knowledge at all, we must be freed from the body; the soul by herself must behold things as they are. Then, it seems, after we are dead, we shall gain the wisdom which we desire, and for which we say we have a passion, but not while we are alive, as the argument shows. For if it be not possible to have pure knowledge while the body is with us, one of two things must be true: either we cannot gain knowledge at all, or we can gain it only after death. For then, and not till then, will the soul exist by herself, 67.
separate from the body. And while we live, we shall come nearest to knowledge, if we have no communion or intercourse with the body beyond what is absolutely necessary, and if we are not defiled with its nature. We must live pure from it until God himself releases us. And when we are thus pure and released from its follies, we shall dwell, I suppose, with others who are pure like ourselves, and we shall of ourselves know all that is pure; and that may be the truth. For I think that the impure is not allowed to attain to the pure. Such, Simmias, I fancy must needs be the language and the reflections of the true lovers of knowledge. Do you not agree with me?

Most assuredly I do, Socrates.

And, my friend, said Socrates, if this be true, XII.
I have good hope that, when I reach the place whither I am going, I shall there, if anywhere, gain fully that which we have sought so earnestly in the past. And so I shall set forth

cheerfully on the journey that is appointed me to-day, and so may every man who thinks that his mind is prepared and purified.

That is quite true, said Simmias.

And does not the purification consist, as we have said, in separating the soul from the body, as far as is possible, and in accustoming her to collect and rally herself together from the body on every side, and to dwell alone by herself as much as she can both now and hereafter, released from the bondage of the body?

Yes, certainly, he said.

Is not what we call death a release and separation of the soul from the body?

Undoubtedly, he replied.

And the true philosopher, we hold, is alone in his constant desire to set his soul free? His study is simply the release and separation of the soul from the body, is it not?

Clearly.

Would it not be absurd then, as I began by saying, for a man to complain at death coming to him, when in his life he has been preparing himself to live as nearly in a state of death as he could? Would not that be absurd?

Yes, indeed.

In truth, then, Simmias, he said, the true philosopher studies to die, and to him of all men is death least terrible. Now look at the matter in this way. In everything he is at enmity with his body, and he longs to possess his soul alone. Would it not then be most unreasonable, if he were to fear and complain

when he has his desire, instead of rejoicing to go to the place where he hopes to gain the 68.
wisdom that he has passionately longed for all his life, and to be released from the company of his enemy? Many a man has willingly gone to the other world, when a human love, or wife or son has died, in the hope of seeing there those whom he longed for, and of being with them: and will a man who has a real passion for wisdom, and a firm hope of really finding wisdom in the other world and nowhere else, grieve at death, and not depart rejoicing? Nay, my friend, you ought not to think that, if he be truly a philosopher. He will be firmly convinced that there and nowhere else will he meet with wisdom in its purity. And if this be so, would it not, I repeat, be very unreasonable for such a man to fear death?

Yes, indeed, he replied, it would.

Does not this show clearly, he said, that any XIII.
man whom you see grieving at the approach of death, is after all no lover of wisdom, but a lover of his body? He is also, most likely, a lover either of wealth, or of honour, or, it may be, of both.

Yes, he said, it is as you say.

Well then, Simmias, he went on, does not what is called courage belong especially to the philosopher?

Certainly I think so, he replied.

And does not temperance, the quality which even the world calls temperance, and which means to despise and control and govern the

passions—does not temperance belong only to such men as most despise the body, and pass their lives in philosophy?

Of necessity, he replied.

For if you will consider the courage and the temperance of other men, said he, you will find that they are strange things.

How so, Socrates?

You know, he replied, that all other men regard death as one of the great evils to which mankind are subject?

Indeed they do, he said.

And when the brave men of them submit to death, do not they do so from a fear of still greater evils?

Yes.

Then all men but the philosopher are brave from fear and because they are afraid. Yet it is rather a strange thing for a man to be brave out of fear and cowardice.

Indeed it is.

And are not the orderly men of them in exactly the same case? Are not they temperate from a kind of intemperance? We should say that this cannot be: but in them this state of foolish temperance comes to that. They desire certain pleasures, and fear to lose them; and so they abstain from other pleasures because they are mastered by these. Intemperance is defined
69. to mean being under the dominion of pleasure: yet they only master certain pleasures because they are mastered by others. But that is exactly what I said just now, that, in a way,

they are made temperate from intemperance.

It seems to be so.

My dear Simmias, I fear that virtue is not really to be bought in this way, by bartering pleasure for pleasure, and pain for pain, and fear for fear, and the greater for the less, like coins. There is only one sterling coin for which all these things ought to be exchanged, and that is wisdom. All that is bought and sold for this and with this, whether courage, or temperance, or justice, is real: in one word true virtue cannot be without wisdom, and it matters nothing whether pleasure, and fear, and all other such things, are present or absent. But I think that the virtue which is composed of pleasures and fears bartered with one another, and severed from wisdom, is only a shadow of true virtue, and that it has no freedom, nor health, nor truth. True virtue in reality is a kind of purifying from all these things: and temperance, and justice, and courage, and wisdom itself, are the purification. And I fancy that the men who established our mysteries had a very real meaning: in truth they have been telling us in parables all the time that whosoever comes to Hades uninitiated and profane, will lie in the mire; while he that has been purified and initiated shall dwell with the gods. For 'the thyrsus-bearers are many,' as they say in the mysteries, 'but the inspired few.' And by these last, I believe, are meant only the true philosophers. And I in my life have striven as hard as I was able,

and have left nothing undone that I might become one of them. Whether I have striven in the right way, and whether I have succeeded or not, I suppose that I shall learn in a little while, when I reach the other world, if it be the will of God.

That is my defence, Simmias and Cebes, to show that I have reason for not being angry or grieved at leaving you and my masters here. I believe that in the next world, no less than in this, I shall meet with good masters and friends, though the multitude are incredulous of it. And if I have been more successful with you in my defence than I was with my Athenian judges, it is well.

XIV. When Socrates had finished, Cebes replied to him, and said, I think that for the most part you are right, Socrates. But men are very
70. incredulous of what you have said of the soul. They fear that she will no longer exist anywhere when she has left the body, but that she will be destroyed and perish on the very day of death. They think that the moment that she is released and leaves the body, she will be dissolved and vanish away like breath or smoke, and thenceforward cease to exist at all. If she were to exist somewhere as a whole, released from the evils which you enumerated just now, we should have good reason to hope, Socrates, that what you say is true. But it will need no little persuasion and assurance to show that the soul exists after death, and continues to possess any power or wisdom.

True, Cebes, said Socrates ; but what are we to do? Do you wish to converse about these matters and see if what I say is probable?

I for one, said Cebes, should gladly hear your opinion about them.

I think, said Socrates, that no one who heard me now, even if he were a comic poet, would say that I am an idle talker about things which do not concern me. So, if you wish it, let us examine this question.

XV. Let us consider whether or no the souls of men exist in the next world after death, thus. There is an ancient belief, which we remember, that on leaving this world they exist there, and that they return hither and are born again from the dead. But if it be true that the living are born from the dead, our souls must exist in the other world : otherwise they could not be born again. It will be a sufficient proof that this is so if we can really prove that the living are born only from the dead. But if this is not so, we shall have to find some other argument.

Exactly, said Cebes.

Well, said he, the easiest way of answering the question will be to consider it not in relation to men only, but also in relation to all animals and plants, and in short to all things that are generated. Is it the case that everything, which has an opposite, is generated only from its opposite. By opposites I mean, the honourable and the base, the just and the unjust, and so on in a thousand other instances. Let us consider then whether it is necessary for everything

that has an opposite to be generated only from its own opposite. For instance, when anything becomes greater, I suppose it must first have been less and then become greater?

Yes.

And if a thing becomes less, it must have
71. been greater, and afterwards become less?

That is so, said he.

And further, the weaker is generated from the stronger, and the swifter from the slower?

Certainly.

And the worse is generated from the better, and the more just from the more unjust?

Of course.

Then it is sufficiently clear to us that all things are generated in this way, opposites from opposites?

Quite so.

And in every pair of opposites, are there not two generations between the two members of the pair, from the one to the other, and then back again from the other to the first? Between the greater and the less are growth and diminution, and we say that the one grows and the other diminishes, do we not?

Yes, he said.

And there is division and composition, and cold and hot, and so on. In fact is it not a universal law, even though we do not always express it in so many words, that opposites are generated always from one another, and that there is a process of generation from one to the other?

It is, he replied.

Well, said he, is there an opposite to life, in XVI.
the same way that sleep is the opposite of being awake?

Certainly, he answered.

What is it?

Death, he replied.

Then if life and death are opposites, they are generated the one from the other: they are two, and between them there are two generations. Is it not so?

Of course.

Now, said Socrates, I will explain to you one of the two pairs of opposites of which I spoke just now, and its generations, and you shall explain to me the other. Sleep is the opposite of waking. From sleep is produced the state of waking: and from the state of waking is produced sleep. Their generations are, first, to fall asleep; secondly, to awake. Is that clear? he asked.

Yes, quite.

Now then, said he, do you tell me about life and death. Death is the opposite of life, is it not?

It is.

And they are generated the one from the other?

Yes.

Then what is that which is generated from the living?

The dead, he replied.

And what is generated from the dead?

I must admit that it is the living.

Then living things and living men are generated from the dead, Cebes?

Clearly, said he.

Then our souls exist in the other world? he said.

Apparently.

Now of these two generations the one is certain? Death I suppose is certain enough, is it not?

Yes, quite, he replied.

What then shall we do? said he. Shall we not assign an opposite generation to correspond? Or is nature imperfect here? Must we not assign some opposite generation to dying?

I think so, certainly, he said.

And what must it be?

To come to life again.

And if there be such a thing as a return to
72. life, he said, it will be a generation from the dead to the living, will it not?

It will, certainly.

Then we are agreed on this point: namely, that the living are generated from the dead no less than the dead from the living. But we agreed that, if this be so, it is a sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must exist somewhere, whence they come into being again.

I think, Socrates, that that is the necessary result of our premises.

XVII. And I think, Cebes, said he, that our conclusion has not been an unfair one. For if opposites did not always correspond with op-

posites as they are generated, moving as it were round in a circle, and there were generation in a straight line forward from one opposite only, with no turning or return to the other, then, you know, all things would come at length to have the same form and be in the same state, and would cease to be generated at all.

What do you mean? he asked.

It is not at all hard to understand my meaning, he replied. If, for example, the one opposite, to go to sleep, existed, without the corresponding opposite, to wake up, which is generated from the first, then all nature would at last make the tale of Endymion meaningless, and he would no longer be conspicuous; for everything else would be in the same state of sleep that he was in. And if all things were compounded together and never separated, the Chaos of Anaxagoras would soon be realised. Just in the same way, my dear Cebes, if all things, in which there is any life, were to die, and when they were dead were to remain in that form and not come to life again, would not the necessary result be that everything at last would be dead, and nothing alive? For if living things were generated from other sources than death, and were to die, the result is inevitable that all things would be consumed by death. Is it not so?

It is indeed, I think, Socrates, said Cebes; I think that what you say is perfectly true.

Yes, Cebes, he said, I think it is certainly so. We are not misled into this conclusion. The

dead do come to life again, and the living are generated from them, and the souls of the dead exist; and with the souls of the good it is well, and with the souls of the evil it is evil.

XVIII. And besides, Socrates, rejoined Cebes, if the doctrine which you are fond of stating, that our learning is only a process of recollection, be true, then I suppose we must have learnt at some former time what we recollect now. And that would be impossible unless our souls had existed somewhere before they came into this
73. human form. So that is another reason for believing the soul immortal.

But, Cebes, interrupted Simmias, what are the proofs of that? Recall them to me: I am not very clear about them at present.

One argument, answered Cebes, and the strongest of all, is that if you question men about anything in the right way, they will answer you correctly of themselves. But they would not have been able to do that, unless they had had within themselves knowledge and right reason. Again, show them such things as geometrical diagrams, and the proof of the doctrine is complete.[1]

And if that does not convince you, Simmias, said Socrates, look at the matter in another way and see if you agree then. You have doubts,

[1] For an example of this see *Meno*, 82 A. *seq.*, where, as here, Socrates proves the doctrine of Reminiscence, and therefore the Immortality of the Soul, by putting judicious questions about geometry to a slave who was quite ignorant of geometry, and, with the help of diagrams, obtaining from him correct answers.

I know, how what is called knowledge can be recollection.

Nay, replied Simmias, I do not doubt. But I want to recollect the argument about recollection. What Cebes undertook to explain has nearly brought your theory back to me and convinced me. But I am none the less ready to hear how you undertake to explain it.

In this way, he returned. We are agreed, I suppose, that if a man remembers anything, he must have known it at some previous time.

Certainly, he said.

And are we agreed that when knowledge comes in the following way, it is recollection? When a man has seen or heard anything, or has perceived it by some other sense, and then knows not that thing only, but has also in his mind an impression of some other thing, of which the knowledge is quite different, are we not right in saying that he remembers the thing of which he has an impression in his mind?

What do you mean?

I mean this. The knowledge of a man is different from the knowledge of a lyre, is it not?

Certainly.

And you know that when lovers see a lyre, or a garment, or anything that their favourites are wont to use, they have this feeling. They know the lyre, and in their mind they receive the image of the youth whose the lyre was. That is recollection. For instance, some one seeing Simmias often is reminded of Cebes;

and there are endless examples of the same thing.

Indeed there are, said Simmias.

Is not that a kind of recollection, he said; and more especially when a man has this feeling with reference to things which the lapse of time and inattention have made him forget?

Yes, certainly, he replied.

Well, he went on, is it possible to recollect a man on seeing the picture of a horse, or the picture of a lyre? or to recall Simmias on seeing a picture of Cebes?

Certainly.

And it is possible to recollect Simmias himself on seeing a picture of Simmias?

74. No doubt, he said.

XIX. Then in all these cases there is recollection caused by similar objects, and also by dissimilar objects?

There is.

But when a man has a recollection caused by similar objects, will he not have a further feeling, and consider whether the likeness to that which he recollects is defective in any way or not?

He will, he said.

Now see if this is true, he went on. Do we not believe in the existence of equality,—not the equality of pieces of wood, or of stones; but something beyond that,—equality in the abstract? Shall we say that there is such a thing, or not?

Yes indeed, said Simmias, most emphatically we will.

And do we know what this abstract equality is?

Certainly, he replied.

Where did we get the knowledge of it? Was it not from seeing the equal pieces of wood, and stones, and the like, which we were speaking of just now? Did we not form from them the idea of abstract equality, which is different from them? Or do you think that it is not different? Consider the question in this way. Do not equal pieces of wood and stones appear to us sometimes equal, and sometimes unequal, though in fact they remain the same all the time?

Certainly they do.

But did absolute equals ever seem to you to be unequal, or abstract equality to be inequality?

No, never, Socrates.

Then equal things, he said, are not the same as abstract equality?

No, certainly not, Socrates.

Yet it was from these equal things, he said, which are different from abstract equality, that you have conceived and got your knowledge of abstract equality?

That is quite true, he replied.

And that whether it is like them or unlike them?

Certainly.

But that makes no difference, he said. As long as the sight of one thing brings another

thing to your mind, there must be recollection, whether or no the two things are like.

That is so.

Well then, said he, do the equal pieces of wood, and other similar equal things, of which we have been speaking, affect us at all in this way? Do they seem to us to be equal, in the way that abstract equality is equal? Do they come short of being like abstract equality, or not?

Indeed, they come very short of it, he replied.

Are we agreed about this? A man sees something and thinks to himself, 'This thing that I see aims at being like some other thing; but it comes short, and cannot be like that other thing; it is inferior:' must not the man who thinks that, have known at some previous time that other thing, which he says that it resembles, and to which it is inferior?

He must.

Well, have we ourselves had the same sort of feeling with reference to equal things, and to abstract equality?

Yes, certainly.

75. Then we must have had knowledge of equality before we first saw equal things, and perceived that they all strive to be like equality, and all come short of it.

That is so.

And we are agreed also that we have not, nor could we have, obtained the idea of equality except from sight or touch or some other sense: the same is true of all the senses.

Yes, Socrates, for the purposes of the argument that is so.

At any rate it is by the senses that we must perceive that all sensible objects strive to resemble absolute equality, and are inferior to it. Is not that so?

Yes.

Then before we began to see, and to hear, and to use the other senses, we must have received the knowledge of the nature of abstract and real equality; otherwise we could not have compared equal sensible objects with abstract equality, and seen that the former in all cases strive to be like the latter, though they are always inferior to it?

That is the necessary consequence of what we have been saying, Socrates.

Did we not see, and hear, and possess the other senses as soon as we were born?

Yes, certainly.

And we must have received the knowledge of abstract equality before we had these senses?

Yes.

Then, it seems, we must have received that knowledge before we were born?

It does.

Now if we received this knowledge before XX.
our birth, and were born with it, we knew, both before, and at the moment of our birth, not only the equal, and the greater, and the less, but also everything of the same kind, did we not? Our present reasoning does not refer only to

equality. It refers just as much to absolute good, and absolute beauty, and absolute justice, and absolute holiness; in short, I repeat, to everything which we mark with the name of the real, in the questions and answers of our dialectic. So we must have received our knowledge of all realities before we were born.

That is so.

And we must always be born with this knowledge, and must always retain it throughout life, if we have not each time forgotten it, after having received it. For to know means to receive and retain knowledge, and not to have lost it. Do not we mean by forgetting the loss of knowledge, Simmias?

Yes, certainly, Socrates, he said.

But, I suppose, if it be the case that we lost at birth the knowledge which we received before we were born, and then afterwards, by using our senses on the objects of sense, recovered the knowledge which we had previously possessed, then what we call learning is the recovering of knowledge which is already ours And are we not right in calling that recollection?

Certainly.

76. For we have found it possible to perceive a thing by sight, or hearing, or any other sense, and thence to form a notion of some other thing, like or unlike, which had been forgotten, but with which this thing was associated. And therefore, I say, one of two things must be true.

Either we are all born with this knowledge, and retain it all our life; or, after birth, those whom we say are learning are only recollecting, and our knowledge is recollection.

Yes indeed, that is undoubtedly true, Socrates.

Then which do you choose, Simmias? Are we born with knowledge, or do we recollect the things of which we have received knowledge before our birth? XXI.

I cannot say at present, Socrates.

Well, have you an opinion about this question? Can a man who knows give an account of what he knows, or not? What do you think about that?

Yes, of course he can, Socrates.

And do you think that every one can give an account of the ideas of which we have been speaking?

I wish I did, indeed, said Simmias: but I am very much afraid that by this time to-morrow there will no longer be any man living able to do so as it should be done.

Then, Simmias, he said, you do not think that all men know these things?

Certainly not.

Then they recollect what they once learned?

Necessarily.

And when did our souls gain this knowledge? It cannot have been after we were born men.

No, certainly not.

Then it was before?

Yes.

Then, Simmias, our souls existed formerly,

apart from our bodies, and possessed intelligence before they came into man's shape.[1]

Unless we receive this knowledge at the moment of birth, Socrates. That time still remains.

Well, my friend: and at what other time do we lose it? We agreed just now that we are not born with it: do we lose it at the same moment that we gain it? or can you suggest any other time?

I cannot, Socrates. I did not see that I was talking nonsense.

Then, Simmias, he said, is not this the truth?

XXII. If, as we are for ever repeating, beauty, and good, and the other ideas[2] really exist, and if we refer all the objects of sensible perception to these ideas which were formerly ours, and which we find to be ours still, and compare sensible objects with them, then, just as they exist, our souls must have existed before ever we were born. But if they do not exist, then our reasoning will have been thrown away. Is it so? If these ideas exist, does it not at

[1] Cf. Wordsworth's famous *Ode on Intimations of Immortality.* It must be noticed that in one respect Wordsworth exactly reverses Plato's theory. With Wordsworth "Heaven lies about us in our infancy": and as we grow to manhood we gradually forget it. With Plato, we lose the knowledge which we possessed in a prior state of existence, at birth, and recover it, as we grow up. [Mr. Archer-Hind has a similar remark in his note on this passage.]

[2] For a fuller account of the ideas, see *post.* ch. xlix., 100 B. *seq.*

once follow that our souls must have existed before we were born, and if they do not exist, then neither did our souls?

Admirably put, Socrates, said Simmias. I think that the necessity is the same for the one as for the other. The reasoning has reached 77.
a place of safety in the common proof of the existence of our souls before we were born, and of the existence of the ideas of which you spoke. Nothing is so evident to me as that beauty, and good, and the other ideas, which you spoke of just now, have a very real existence indeed. Your proof is quite sufficient for me.

But what of Cebes? said Socrates. I must convince Cebes too.

I think that he is satisfied, said Simmias, though he is the most sceptical of men in argument. But I think that he is perfectly convinced that our souls existed before we were born.

But I do not think myself, Socrates, he con- XXIII.
tinued, that you have proved that the soul will continue to exist when we are dead. The common fear which Cebes spoke of, that she may be scattered to the winds at death, and that death may be the end of her existence, still stands in the way. Assuming that the soul is generated and comes together from some other elements, and exists before she ever enters the human body, why should she not come to an end and be destroyed, after she has entered into the body, when she is released from it?

You are right, Simmias, said Cebes. I think

that only half the required proof has been given. It has been shown that our souls existed before we were born; but it must also be shown that our souls will continue to exist after we are dead, no less than that they existed before we were born, if the proof is to be complete.

That has been shown already, Simmias and Cebes, said Socrates, if you will combine this reasoning with our previous conclusion, that all life is generated from death. For if the soul exists in a previous state, and if when she comes into life and is born, she can only be born from death, and from a state of death, must she not exist after death too, since she has to be born again? So the point which you speak of has been already proved.

XXIV. Still I think that you and Simmias would be glad to discuss this question further. Like children, you are afraid that the wind will really blow the soul away and disperse her when she leaves the body; especially if a man happens to die in a storm and not in a calm.

Cebes laughed and said, Try and convince us as if we were afraid, Socrates; or rather, do not think that we are afraid ourselves. Perhaps there is a child within us who has these fears. Let us try and persuade him not to be afraid of death, as if it were a bugbear.

You must charm him every day, until you have charmed him away, said Socrates.

78. And where shall we find a good charmer, Socrates, he asked, now that you are leaving us?

Hellas is a large country, Cebes, he replied, and good men may doubtless be found in it; and the nations of the Barbarians are many. You must search them all through for such a charmer, sparing neither money nor labour; for there is nothing on which you could spend money more profitably. And you must search for him among yourselves too, for you will hardly find a better charmer than yourselves.

That shall be done, said Cebes. But let us return to the point where we left off, if you will.

Yes, I will: why not?

Very good, he replied.

Well, said Socrates, must we not ask ourselves this question? What kind of thing is liable to suffer dispersion, and for what kind of thing have we to fear dispersion? And then we must see whether the soul belongs to that kind or not, and be confident or afraid about our own souls accordingly. XXV.

That is true, he answered.

Now is it not the compound and composite which is naturally liable to be dissolved in the same way in which it was compounded? And is not what is uncompounded alone not liable to dissolution, if anything is not?

I think that that is so, said Cebes.

And what always remains in the same state and unchanging is most likely to be uncompounded, and what is always changing and never the same is most likely to be compounded, I suppose?

Yes, I think so.

Now let us return to what we were speaking of before in the discussion, he said. Does the being, which in our dialectic we define as meaning absolute existence, remain always in exactly the same state, or does it change? Do absolute equality, absolute beauty, and every other absolute existence, admit of any change at all? or does absolute existence in each case, being essentially uniform, remain the same and unchanging, and never in any case admit of any sort or kind of change whatsoever?

It must remain the same and unchanging, Socrates, said Cebes.

And what of the many beautiful things, such as men, and horses, and garments, and the like, and of all which bears the names of the ideas, whether equal, or beautiful, or anything else? Do they remain the same, or is it exactly the opposite with them? In short, do they never remain the same at all, either in themselves or in their relations?

These things, said Cebes, never remain the same.

79. You can touch them, and see them, and perceive them with the other senses, while you can grasp the unchanging only by the reasoning of the intellect. These latter are invisible and not seen. Is it not so?

That is perfectly true, he said.

XXVI. Let us assume then, he said, if you will, that there are two kinds of existence, the one visible, the other invisible.

Yes, he said.

And the invisible is unchanging, while the visible is always changing.

Yes, he said again.

Are not we men made up of body and soul?

There is nothing else, he replied.

And which of these kinds of existence should we say that the body is most like, and most akin to?

The visible, he replied; that is quite obvious.

And the soul? Is that visible or invisible?

It is invisible to man, Socrates, he said.

But we mean by visible and invisible, visible and invisible to man; do we not?

Yes; that is what we mean.

Then what do we say of the soul? Is it visible, or not visible?

It is not visible.

Then is it invisible?

Yes.

Then the soul is more like the invisible than the body; and the body is like the visible.

That is necessarily so, Socrates.

Have we not also said that, when the soul employs the body in any inquiry, and makes use of sight, or hearing, or any other sense,—for inquiry with the body means inquiry with the senses,—she is dragged away by it to the things which never remain the same, and wanders about blindly, and becomes confused and dizzy, like a drunken man, from dealing with things that are ever changing? XXVII.

Certainly.

But when she investigates any question by

herself, she goes away to the pure, and eternal, and immortal, and unchangeable, to which she is akin, and so she comes to be ever with it, as soon as she is by herself, and can be so: and then she rests from her wanderings, and dwells with it unchangingly, for she is dealing with what is unchanging? And is not this state of the soul called wisdom?

Indeed, Socrates, you speak well and truly, he replied.

Which kind of existence do you think from our former and our present arguments that the soul is more like and more akin to?

I think, Socrates, he replied, that after this inquiry the very dullest man would agree that the soul is infinitely more like the unchangeable than the changeable.

And the body?

That is like the changeable.

XXVIII. Consider the matter in yet another way.
80. When the soul and the body are united, nature ordains the one to be a slave and to be ruled, and the other to be master and to rule. Tell me once again, which do you think is like the divine, and which is like the mortal? Do you not think that the divine naturally rules and has authority, and that the mortal naturally is ruled and is a slave?

I do.

Then which is the soul like?

That is quite plain, Socrates. The soul is like the divine, and the body is like the mortal.

Now tell me, Cebes; is the result of all that

we have said that the soul is most like the divine, and the immortal, and the intelligible, and the uniform, and the indissoluble, and the unchangeable; while the body is most like the human, and the mortal, and the unintelligible, and the multiform, and the dissoluble, and the changeable? Have we any other argument to show that this is not so, my dear Cebes?

We have not.

Then if this is so, is it not the nature of the XXIX.
body to be dissolved quickly, and of the soul to be wholly or very nearly indissoluble?[1]

Certainly.

You observe, he said, that after a man is dead, the visible part of him, his body, which lies in the visible world, and which we call the corpse, which is subject to dissolution and decomposition, is not dissolved and decomposed at once? It remains as it was for a considerable time, and even for a long time, if a man dies with his body in good condition, and in the vigour of life. And when the body falls in and is embalmed, like the mummies of Egypt, it remains nearly entire for an immense time. And should it decay, yet some parts of it, such as the bones and muscles, may almost be said to be immortal. Is it not so?

Yes.

[1] Compare Bishop Butler's *Analogy*, Pt. i. ch. 1, where a similar argument is used: the soul being indiscerptible is immortal. The argument based on the 'divine' nature of the soul is, of course, also a modern one. See *e.g.* Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, LIV.-LVI.

And shall we believe that the soul, which is invisible, and which goes hence to a place that is like herself, glorious, and pure, and invisible, to Hades, which is rightly called the unseen world, to dwell with the good and wise God, whither, if it be the will of God, my soul too must shortly go;—shall we believe that the soul, whose nature is so glorious, and pure, and invisible, is blown away by the winds and perishes as soon as she leaves the body, as the world says? Nay, dear Cebes and Simmias, it is not so. I will tell you what happens to a soul which is pure at her departure, and which in her life has had no intercourse that she could avoid with the body, and so draws after her, when she dies, no taint of the body, but has shunned it, and gathered herself into herself, for such has been her constant study;—and that only means that she has loved wisdom
81 rightly, and has truly practised how to die. Is not this the practice of death?

Yes, certainly.

Does not the soul, then, which is in that state, go away to the invisible that is like herself, and to the divine, and the immortal, and the wise, where she is released from error, and folly, and fear, and fierce passions, and all the other evils that fall to the lot of men, and is happy, and for the rest of time lives in very truth with the gods, as they say that the initiated do? Shall we affirm this, Cebes?

Yes, certainly, said Cebes.

XXX. But if she be defiled and impure when she

leaves the body, from being ever with it, and serving it and loving it, and from being besotted by it, and by its desires and pleasures, so that she thinks nothing true, but what is bodily, and can be touched, and seen, and eaten, and drunk, and used for men's lusts; if she has learnt to hate, and tremble at, and fly from what is dark and invisible to the eye, and intelligible and apprehended by philosophy—do you think that a soul which is in that state will be pure and without alloy at her departure?

No, indeed, he replied.

She is penetrated, I suppose, by the corporeal, which the unceasing intercourse and company and care of the body has made a part of her nature.

Yes.

And, my dear friend, the corporeal must be burdensome, and heavy, and earthy, and visible; and it is by this that such a soul is weighed down and dragged back to the visible world, because she is afraid of the invisible world of Hades, and haunts, it is said, the graves and tombs, where shadowy forms of souls have been seen, which are the phantoms of souls which were impure at their release, and still cling to the visible; which is the reason why they are seen.[1]

That is likely enough, Socrates.

That is likely, certainly, Cebes: and these are not the souls of the good, but of the evil, which are compelled to wander in such places

[1] Professor Jowett compares Milton, *Comus*, 463 foll.

as a punishment for the wicked lives that they have lived; and their wanderings continue until, from the desire for the corporeal that clings to them, they are again imprisoned in a body.

XXXI. And, he continued, they are imprisoned, probably, in the bodies of animals with habits similar to the habits which were theirs in their lifetime.

What do you mean by that, Socrates?

I mean that men who have practised unbridled gluttony, and wantonness, and drunkenness, probably enter the bodies of asses, and
82. suchlike animals. Do you not think so?

Certainly that is very likely.

And those who have chosen injustice, and tyranny, and robbery, enter the bodies of wolves, and hawks, and kites. Where else should we say that such souls go?

No doubt, said Cebes, they go into such animals.

In short, it is quite plain, he said, whither each soul goes; each enters an animal with habits like its own.

Certainly, he replied, that is so.

And of these, he said, the happiest, who go to the best place, are those who have practised the popular and social virtues which are called temperance and justice, and which come from habit and practice, without philosophy or reason?

And why are they the happiest?

Because it is probable that they return into

a mild and social nature like their own, such as that of bees, or wasps, or ants; or, it may be, into the bodies of men, and that from them are made worthy citizens.

Very likely.

But none but the philosopher or the lover of XXXII.
knowledge, who is wholly pure when he goes hence, is permitted to go to the race of the gods; and therefore, my friends Simmias and Cebes, the true philosopher is temperate, and refrains from all the pleasures of the body, and does not give himself up to them. It is not squandering his substance and poverty that he fears, as the multitude and the lovers of wealth do; nor again does he dread the dishonour and disgrace of wickedness, like the lovers of power and honour. It is not for these reasons, that he is temperate.

No, it would be unseemly in him if he were, Socrates, said Cebes.

Indeed it would, he replied: and therefore all those who have any care for their souls, and who do not spend their lives in forming and moulding their bodies, bid farewell to such persons, and do not walk in their ways, thinking that they know not whither they are going. They themselves turn and follow whithersoever philosophy leads them, for they believe that they ought not to resist philosophy, or its deliverance and purification.

How, Socrates?

I will tell you, he replied. The lovers of XXXIII.
knowledge know that when philosophy receives

the soul, she is fast bound in the body, and fastened to it: she is unable to contemplate what is, by herself, or except through the bars of her prison-house, the body; and she is wallowing in utter ignorance. And philosophy sees that the dreadful thing about the imprisonment is that it is caused by lust, and that the
83. captive herself is an accomplice in her own captivity. The lovers of knowledge, I repeat, know that philosophy takes the soul when she is in this condition, and gently encourages her, and strives to release her from her captivity, showing her that the perceptions of the eye, and the ear, and the other senses, are full of deceit, and persuading her to stand aloof from the senses, and to use them only when she must, and exhorting her to rally and gather herself together, and to trust only to herself, and to the real existence which she of her own self apprehends: and to believe that nothing which is subject to change, and which she perceives by other faculties, has any truth, for such things are visible and sensible, while what she herself sees is apprehended by reason and invisible. The soul of the true philosopher thinks that it would be wrong to resist this deliverance from captivity, and therefore she holds aloof, so far as she can, from pleasure, and desire, and pain, and fear; for she reckons that when a man has vehement pleasure, or fear, or pain, or desire, he suffers from them, not merely the evils which might be expected, such as sickness, or some loss arising from the indulgence of his desires;

he suffers what is the greatest and last of evils, and does not take it into account.

What do you mean, Socrates? asked Cebes.

I mean that when the soul of any man feels vehement pleasure or pain, she is forced at the same time to think that the object, whatever it be, of these sensations is the most distinct and truest, when it is not. Such objects are chiefly visible ones, are they not?

They are.

And is it not in this state that the soul is most completely in bondage to the body?

How so?

Because every pleasure and pain has a kind of nail, and nails and pins her to the body, and gives her a bodily nature, making her think that whatever the body says is true. And so, from having the same fancies and the same pleasures as the body, she is obliged, I suppose, to come to have the same ways, and way of life: she must always be defiled with the body when she leaves it, and cannot be pure when she reaches the other world; and so she soon falls back into another body, and takes root in it, like seed that is sown. Therefore she loses all part in intercourse with the divine, and pure, and uniform.

That is very true, Socrates, said Cebes.

It is for these reasons then, Cebes, that the XXXIV.
real lovers of knowledge are temperate and brave; and not for the world's reasons. Or do you think so? 84.

No, certainly I do not.

Assuredly not.[1] The soul of a philosopher will consider that it is the office of philosophy to set her free. She will know that she must not give herself up once more to the bondage of pleasure and pain, from which philosophy is releasing her, and, like Penelope, do a work, only to undo it continually, weaving instead of unweaving her web. She gains for herself peace from these things, and follows reason and ever abides in it, contemplating what is true and divine and real, and fostered up by them. So she thinks that she should live in this life, and when she dies she believes that she will go to what is akin to and like herself, and be released from human ills. A soul, Simmias and Cebes, that has been so nurtured, and so trained, will never fear lest she should be torn in pieces at her departure from the body, and blown away by the winds, and vanish, and utterly cease to exist.

XXXV. At these words there was a long silence. Socrates himself seemed to be absorbed in his argument, and so were most of us. Cebes and Simmias conversed for a little by themselves When Socrates observed them, he said: What? Do you think that our reasoning is incomplete? It still offers many points of doubt and attack, if it is to be examined thoroughly. If you are discussing another question, I have nothing to say. But if you have any difficulty about this one, do not hesitate to tell me what it is, and, if you are of opinion that the argument should

[1] Reading, *οὐ γὰρ· ἀλλ'*, with Stallbaum.

be stated in a better way, explain your views yourselves: and take me along with you, if you think that you will be more successful in my company.

Simmias replied: Well, Socrates, I will tell you the truth. Each of us has a difficulty, and each has been pushing on the other, and urging him to ask you about it. We were anxious to hear what you have to say; but we were reluctant to trouble you, for we were afraid that it might be unpleasant to you to be asked questions now.

Socrates smiled at this answer, and said, Dear me! Simmias; I shall find it hard to convince other people that I do not consider my fate a misfortune, when I cannot convince even you of it, and you are afraid that I am more peevish now than I used to be. You seem to think me inferior in prophetic power to the swans, which, when they find that they have to die, sing more loudly than they ever sang before, for joy that they are about to depart 85.
into the presence of God, whose servants they are. The fear which men have of death themselves makes them speak falsely of the swans, and they say that the swan is wailing at its death, and that it sings loud for grief. They forget that no bird sings when it is hungry, or cold, or in any pain; not even the nightingale, nor the swallow, nor the hoopoe, which, they assert, wail and sing for grief. But I think that neither these birds nor the swan sing for grief. I believe that they have a prophetic

power and foreknowledge of the good things in the next world, for they are Apollo's birds: and so they sing and rejoice on the day of their death, more than in all their life. And I believe that I myself am a fellow slave with the swans, and consecrated to the service of the same God, and that I have prophetic power from my master no less than they; and that I am not more despondent than they are at leaving this life. So, as far as vexing me goes, you may talk to me and ask questions as you please, as long as the Eleven of the Athenians [1] will let you.

Good, said Simmias; I will tell you my difficulty, and Cebes will tell you why he is dissatisfied with your statement. I think, Socrates, and I daresay you think so too, that it is very difficult, and perhaps impossible, to obtain clear knowledge about these matters in this life. Yet I should hold him to be a very poor creature who did not test what is said about them in every way, and persevere until he had examined the question from every side, and could do no more. It is our duty to do one of two things. We must learn, or we must discover for ourselves, the truth of these matters; or, if that be impossible, we must take the best and most irrefragable of human doctrines, and embarking on that, as on a raft, risk the voyage of life,[2] unless a stronger vessel, some divine word, could be found, on which we might take our

[1] Officials whose duty it was to superintend executions. Cp. *ante*, 59. E.

[2] See Bishop Butler's *Analogy*, Introduction.

journey more safely and more securely. And now, after what you have said, I shall not be ashamed to put a question to you: and then I shall not have to blame myself hereafter for not having said now what I think. Cebes and I have been considering your argument; and we think that it is hardly sufficient.

I daresay you are right, my friend, said XXXVI.
Socrates. But tell me, where is it insufficient?

To me it is insufficient, he replied, because the very same argument might be used of a harmony, and a lyre, and its strings. It might be said that the harmony in a tuned lyre is something unseen, and incorporeal, and perfectly beautiful, and divine, while the lyre and its 86.
strings are corporeal, and with the nature of bodies, and compounded, and earthly, and akin to the mortal. Now suppose that, when the lyre is broken and the strings are cut or snapped, a man were to press the same argument that you have used, and were to say that the harmony cannot have perished, and that it must still exist: for it cannot possibly be that the lyre and the strings, with their mortal nature, continue to exist, though those strings have been broken, while the harmony, which is of the same nature as the divine and the immortal, and akin to them, has perished, and perished before the mortal lyre. He would say that the harmony itself must still exist somewhere, and that the wood and the strings will rot away before anything happens to it. And I think, Socrates, that you too must be aware that many of us

believe the soul to be most probably a mixture and harmony of the elements by which our body is, as it were, strung and held together, such as heat and cold, and dry and wet, and the like, when they are mixed together well and in due proportion. Now if the soul is a harmony, it is clear that, when the body is relaxed out of proportion, or over-strung by disease or other evils, the soul, though most divine, must perish at once, like other harmonies of sound and of all works of art, while what remains of each body must remain for a long time, until it be burnt or rotted away. What then shall we say to a man who asserts that the soul, being a mixture of the elements of the body, perishes first, at what is called death?

XXXVII. Socrates looked keenly at us, as he often used to do, and smiled. Simmias' objection is a fair one, he said. If any of you is readier than I am, why does he not answer? For Simmias looks like a formidable assailant. But before we answer him, I think that we had better hear what fault Cebes has to find with my reasoning, and so gain time to consider our reply. And then, when we have heard them both, we must either give in to them, if they seem to harmonise, or, if they do not, we must proceed to argue in defence of our reasoning. Come, Cebes, what is it that troubles you, and makes you doubt?

I will tell you, replied Cebes. I think that the argument is just where it was, and still open
87. to our former objection. You have shown very

cleverly, and, if it is not arrogant to say so, quite conclusively, that our souls existed before they entered the human form. I don't retract my admission on that point. But I am not convinced that they will continue to exist after we are dead. I do not agree with Simmias' objection, that the soul is not stronger and more lasting than the body: I think that it is very much superior in those respects. 'Well, then,' the argument might reply, 'do you still doubt, when you see that the weaker part of a man continues to exist after his death? Do you not think that the more lasting part of him must necessarily be preserved for as long?' See, therefore, if there is anything in what I say; for I think that I, like Simmias, shall best express my meaning in a figure. It seems to me that a man might use an argument similar to yours, to prove that a weaver, who had died in old age, had not in fact perished, but was still alive somewhere; on the ground that the garment, which the weaver had woven for himself and used to wear, had not perished or been destroyed. And if any one were incredulous, he might ask whether a human being, or a garment constantly in use and wear, lasts the longest; and on being told that a human being lasts much the longest, he might think that he had shown beyond all doubt that the man was safe, because what lasts a shorter time than the man had not perished. But that, I suppose, is not so, Simmias; for you too must examine what I say. Every one would understand that

such an argument was simple nonsense. This weaver wove himself many such garments and wore them out ; he outlived them all but the last, but he perished before that one. Yet a man is in no wise inferior to his cloak, or weaker than it, on that account. And I think that the soul's relation to the body may be expressed in a similar figure. Why should not a man very reasonably say in just the same way that the soul lasts a long time, while the body is weaker and lasts a shorter time? But, he might go on, each soul wears out many bodies, especially if she lives for many years. For if the body is in a state of flux and decay in the man's life-time, and the soul is ever repairing the worn-out part, it will surely follow that the soul, on perishing, will be clothed in her last robe, and perish before that alone. But when the soul has perished, then the body will show its weakness and quickly rot away. So as yet we have no right to be confident, on the strength of this argument, that our souls continue to
88. exist after we are dead. And a man might concede even more than this to an opponent who used your argument ;[1] he might admit not only that our souls existed in the period before we were born, but also that there is no reason why some of them should not continue to exist in the future, and often come into being, and die again, after we are dead ; for the soul is strong enough by nature to endure coming into being many times. He might grant that, without

[1] Reading τῷ λέγοντι ἃ σὺ λέγεις (Schanz).

conceding that she suffers no harm in all these births, or that she is not at last wholly destroyed at one of the deaths; and he might say that no man knows when this death and dissolution of the body, which brings destruction to the soul, will be, for it is impossible for any man to find out that. But if this is true, a man's confidence about death must be an irrational confidence, unless he can prove that the soul is wholly indestructible and immortal. Otherwise every one who is dying must fear that his soul will perish utterly this time in her separation from the body.

XXXVIII. It made us all very uncomfortable to listen to them, as we afterwards said to each other. We had been fully convinced by the previous argument; and now they seemed to overturn our conviction, and to make us distrust all the arguments that were to come, as well as the preceding ones, and to doubt if our judgment was worth anything, or even if certainty could be attained at all.

Ech. By the gods, Phædo, I can understand your feelings very well. I myself felt inclined while you were speaking to ask myself, 'Then what reasoning are we to believe in future? That of Socrates was quite convincing, and now it has fallen into discredit.' For the doctrine that our soul is a harmony has always taken a wonderful hold of me, and your mentioning it reminded me that I myself had held it. And now I must begin again and find some other reasoning which shall convince me that

a man's soul does not die with him at his death. So tell me, I pray you, how did Socrates pursue the argument? Did he show any signs of uneasiness, as you say that you did, or did he come to the defence of his argument calmly? And did he defend it satisfactorily or no? Tell me the whole story as exactly as you can.

89. *Phædo.* I have often, Echecrates, wondered at Socrates; but I never admired him more than I admired him then. There was nothing very strange in his having an answer: what I chiefly wondered at was, first, the kindness and good-nature and respect with which he listened to the young men's objections; and, secondly, the quickness with which he perceived their effect upon us; and, lastly, how well he healed our wounds, and rallied us as if we were beaten and flying troops, and encouraged us to follow him, and to examine the reasoning with him.

Ech. How?

Phædo. I will tell you. I was sitting by the bed on a stool at his right hand, and his seat was a good deal higher than mine. He stroked my head and gathered up the hair on my neck in his hand—you know he used often to play with my hair—and said, To-morrow, Phædo, I daresay you will cut off these beautiful locks.

I suppose so, Socrates, I replied.

You will not, if you take my advice.

Why not? I asked.

You and I will cut off our hair to-day, he said, if our argument be dead indeed, and we cannot bring it to life again. And I, if I were

you, and the argument were to escape me, would swear an oath, as the Argives did, not to wear my hair long again, until I had renewed the fight and conquered the argument of Simmias and Cebes.

But Heracles himself, they say, is not a match for two, I replied.

Then summon me to aid you, as your Iolaus, while there is still light.

Then I summon you, not as Heracles summoned Iolaus, but as Iolaus might summon Heracles.

It will be the same, he replied. But first let XXXIX
us take care not to make a mistake.

What mistake? I asked.

The mistake of becoming misologists, or haters of reasoning, as men become misanthropists, he replied: for to hate reasoning is the greatest evil that can happen to us. Misology and misanthropy both come from similar causes. The latter arises out of the implicit and irrational confidence which is placed in a man, who is believed by his friend to be thoroughly true and sincere and trustworthy, and who is soon afterwards discovered to be a bad man and untrustworthy. This happens again and again; and when a man has had this experience many times, particularly at the hands of those whom he has believed to be his nearest and dearest friends, and he has quarrelled with many of them, he ends by hating all men, and thinking that there is no good at all in any one. Have you not seen this happen?

Yes, certainly, said I.

Is it not discreditable? he said. Is it not clear that such a man tries to deal with men without understanding human nature? Had he understood it he would have known that,
90. in fact, good men and bad men are very few indeed, and that the majority of men are neither one nor the other.

What do you mean? I asked.

Just what is true of extremely large and extremely small things, he replied. What is rarer than to find a man, or a dog, or anything else which is either extremely large or extremely small? Or again, what is rarer than to find a man who is extremely swift or slow, or extremely base or honourable, or extremely black or white? Have you not noticed that in all these cases the extremes are rare and few, and that the average specimens are abundant and many?

Yes, certainly, I replied.

And in the same way, if there were a competition in wickedness, he said, don't you think that the leading sinners would be found to be very few?

That is likely enough, said I.

Yes, it is, he replied. But this is not the point in which arguments are like men: it was you who led me on to discuss this point. The analogy is this. When a man believes some reasoning to be true, though he does not understand the art of reasoning, and then soon afterwards, rightly or wrongly, comes to think that

it is false, and this happens to him time after time, he ends by disbelieving in reasoning altogether. You know that persons who spend their time in disputation, come at last to think themselves the wisest of men, and to imagine that they alone have discovered that there is no soundness or certainty anywhere, either in reasoning or in things ; and that all existence is in a state of perpetual flux, like the currents of the Euripus, and never remains still for a moment.

Yes, I replied, that is certainly true.

And, Phædo, he said, if there be a system of reasoning which is true, and certain, and which our minds can grasp, it would be very lamentable that a man, who has met with some of these arguments which at one time seem true and at another false, should at last, in the bitterness of his heart gladly put all the blame on the reasoning, instead of on himself and his own unskilfulness, and spend the rest of his life in hating and reviling reasoning, and lose the truth and knowledge of reality.

Indeed, I replied, that would be very lamentable.

First then, he said, let us be careful not to XL.
admit into our souls the notion that all reasoning is very likely unsound : let us rather think that we ourselves are not yet sound. And we must strive earnestly like men to become sound, you, my friends, for the sake of all your future life ; and I, because of my death. For I am 91.
afraid that at present I can hardly look at

death like a philosopher; I am in a contentious mood, like the uneducated persons who never give a thought to the truth of the question about which they are disputing, but are only anxious to persuade their audience that they themselves are right. And I think that to-day I shall differ from them only in one thing. I shall not be anxious to persuade my audience that I am right, except by the way; but I shall be very anxious indeed to persuade myself. For see, my dear friend, how selfish my reasoning is. If what I say is true, it is well to believe it. But if there is nothing after death, at any rate I shall pain my friends less by my lamentations in the interval before I die. And this ignorance will not last for ever—that would have been an evil—it will soon come to an end. So prepared, Simmias and Cebes, he said, I come to the argument. And you, if you take my advice, will think not of Socrates, but of the truth; and you will agree with me, if you think that what I say is true: otherwise you will oppose me with every argument that you have: and be careful that, in my anxiety to convince you, I do not deceive both you and myself, and go away, leaving my sting behind me, like a bee.

XLI. Now let us proceed, he said. And first, if you find I have forgotten your arguments, repeat them. Simmias, I think, has fears and misgivings that the soul, being of the nature of a harmony, may perish before the body, though she is more divine and nobler than the body.

Cebes, if I am not mistaken, conceded that the soul is more enduring than the body ; but he said that no one could tell whether the soul, after wearing out many bodies many times, did not herself perish on leaving her last body, and whether death be not precisely this, the destruction of the soul ; for the destruction of the body is unceasing. Is there anything else, Simmias and Cebes, which we have to examine ?

They both agreed that these were the questions.

Do you reject all our previous conclusions, he asked, or only some of them ?

Only some of them, they replied.

Well, said he, what do you say of our doctrine that knowledge is recollection, and that therefore our souls must necessarily have existed somewhere else, before they were imprisoned in our bodies ? 92.

I, replied Cebes, was convinced by it at the time in a wonderful way : and now there is no doctrine to which I adhere more firmly.

And I am of that mind too, said Simmias ; and I shall be very much surprised if I ever change it.

But, my Theban friend, you will have to change it, said Socrates, if this opinion of yours, that a harmony is a composite thing, and that the soul is a harmony composed of the elements of the body at the right tension, is to stand. You will hardly allow yourself to assert that the harmony was in existence before the things from

which it was to be composed? Will you do that?

Certainly not, Socrates.

But you see that that is what your assertion comes to when you say that the soul existed before she came into the form and body of man, and yet that she is composed of elements which did not yet exist? Your harmony is not like what you compare it to: the lyre and the strings and the sounds, as yet untuned, come into existence first: and the harmony is composed last of all, and perishes first. How will this belief of yours accord with the other?

It will not, replied Simmias.

And yet, said he, an argument about harmony is hardly the place for a discord.

No, indeed, said Simmias.

Well, there is a discord in your argument, he said. You must choose which doctrine you will retain, that knowledge is recollection, or that the soul is a harmony.

The former, Socrates, certainly, he replied. The latter has never been demonstrated to me; it rests only on probable and plausible grounds, which make it a popular opinion. I know that doctrines which ground their proofs on probabilities are impostors, and that they are very apt to mislead, both in geometry and everything else, if one is not on one's guard against them. But the doctrine about recollection and knowledge rests upon a foundation which claims belief. We agreed that the soul exists before she ever enters the body, as surely as the

essence itself which has the name of real being, exists.[1] And I am persuaded that I believe in this essence rightly and on sufficient evidence. It follows therefore, I suppose, that I cannot allow myself or any one else to say that the soul is a harmony.

And, consider the question in another way, Simmias, said Socrates. Do you think that a harmony or any other composition can exist in a state other than the state of the elements of which it is composed? XLII. 93.

Certainly not.

Nor, I suppose, can it do or suffer anything beyond what they do and suffer?

He assented.

A harmony therefore cannot lead the elements of which it is composed; it must follow them?

He agreed.

And much less can it be moved, or make a sound, or do anything else, in opposition to its parts.

Much less, indeed, he replied.

Well; is not every harmony by nature a harmony according as it is adjusted?

I don't understand you, he replied.

If it is tuned more, and to a greater extent, he said, supposing that to be possible, will it not be more a harmony, and to a greater extent, while if it is tuned less, and to a smaller extent, will it not be less a harmony, and to a smaller extent?

[1] Reading *αὐτὴ* for *αὐτῆς* (Schanz).

Certainly.

Well, is this true of the soul? Can one soul be more a soul, and to a greater extent, or less a soul, and to a smaller extent, than another, even in the smallest degree?

Certainly not, he replied.

Well then, he replied, please tell me this; is not one soul said to have intelligence and virtue and to be good, while another is said to have folly and vice and to be bad? And is it not true?

Yes, certainly.

What then will those, who assert that the soul is a harmony, say that the virtue and the vice which are in our souls are? Another harmony and another discord? Will they say that the good soul is in tune, and that, herself a harmony, she has within herself another harmony, and that the bad soul is out of tune herself, and has no other harmony within her?

I, said Simmias, cannot tell. But it is clear that they would have to say something of the kind.

But it has been conceded, he said, that one soul is never more or less a soul than another. In other words, we have agreed that one harmony is never more, or to a greater extent, or less, or to a smaller extent a harmony than another. Is it not so?

Yes, certainly.

And the harmony which is neither more nor less a harmony, is not more or less tuned. Is that so?

Yes.

And has that which is neither more nor less tuned, a greater, or a less, or an equal share of harmony?

An equal share.

Then, since one soul is never more nor less a soul than another, it has not been more or less tuned either?

True.

Therefore it can have no greater share of harmony or of discord?

Certainly not.

And, therefore, can one soul contain more vice or virtue than another, if vice be discord, and virtue harmony?

By no means.

Or rather, Simmias, to speak quite accurately, 94.
I suppose that there will be no vice in any soul, if the soul is a harmony. I take it, there can never be any discord in a harmony, which is a perfect harmony.

Certainly not.

Neither can a soul, if it be a perfect soul, have any vice in it?

No; that follows necessarily from what has been said.

Then the result of this reasoning is that all the souls of all living creatures will be equally good, if the nature of all souls is to be equally souls.

Yes, I think so, Socrates, he said.

And do you think that this is true, he asked, and that this would have been the fate of our

argument, if the hypothesis that the soul is a harmony had been correct?

No, certainly not, he replied.

XLIII. Well, said he, of all the parts of a man, should you not say that it was the soul, and particularly the wise soul, which rules?

I should.

Does she yield to the passions of the body, or does she oppose them? I mean this. When the body is hot and thirsty, does not the soul drag it away and prevent it from drinking, and when it is hungry does she not prevent it from eating? And do we not see her opposing the passions of the body in a thousand other ways?

Yes, certainly.

But we have also agreed that, if she is a harmony, she can never give a sound contrary to the tensions, and relaxations, and vibrations, and other changes of the elements of which she is composed; that she must follow them, and can never lead them?

Yes, he replied, we certainly have.

Well, now do we not find the soul acting in just the opposite way, and leading all the elements of which she is said to consist, and opposing them in almost everything all through life; and lording it over them in every way, and chastising them, sometimes severely, and with a painful discipline, such as gymnastic and medicine, and sometimes lightly; sometimes threatening and sometimes admonishing the desires and passions and fears, as though she were speaking to something other than herself,

as Homer makes Odysseus do in the Odyssey, where he says that

> "He smote upon his breast, and chid his heart:
> 'Endure, my heart, e'en worse hast thou endured.'"[1]

Do you think that when Homer wrote that, he supposed the soul to be a harmony, and capable of being led by the passions of the body, and not of a nature to lead them, and be their lord, being herself far too divine a thing to be like a harmony?

Certainly, Socrates, I think not.

Then, my excellent friend, it is quite wrong to say that the soul is a harmony. For then, you see, we should not be in agreement either with the divine poet Homer, or with ourselves. 95.

That is true, he replied.

Very good, said Socrates; I think that we XLIV.
have contrived to appease our Theban Harmonia with tolerable success. But how about Cadmus, Cebes? he said. How shall we appease him, and with what reasoning?

I daresay that you will find out how to do it, said Cebes. At all events you have argued that the soul is not a harmony in a way which surprised me very much. When Simmias was stating his objection, I wondered how any one could possibly dispose of his argument: and so I was very much surprised to see it fall before the very first onset of yours. I should not wonder if the same fate awaited the argument of Cadmus.

[1] Hom. *Od.*, xx. 17.

My good friend, said Socrates, do not be over confident, or some evil eye will overturn the argument that is to come. However, that we will leave to God; let us, like Homer's heroes, 'advancing boldly,' see if there is anything in what you say. The sum of what you seek is this. You require me to prove to you that the soul is indestructible and immortal; for if it be not so, you think that the confidence of a philosopher, who is confident in death, and who believes that when he is dead he will fare infinitely better in the other world than if he had lived a different sort of life in this world, is a foolish and idle confidence. You say that to show that the soul is strong and godlike, and that she existed before we were born men, is not enough; for that does not necessarily prove her immortality, but only that she lasts a long time, and has existed an enormous while, and has known and done many things in a previous state. Yet she is not any the more immortal for that: her very entrance into man's body was, like a disease, the beginning of her destruction. And, you say, she passes this life in misery, and at last perishes in what we call death. You think that it makes no difference at all to the fears of each one of us, whether she enters the body once or many times: for every one but a fool must fear death, if he does not know and cannot prove that she is immortal. That, I think, Cebes, is the substance of your objection. I state it again and again on purpose, that nothing may

escape us, and that you may add to it or take away from it anything that you wish.

Cebes replied: No, that is my meaning. I don't want to add or to take away anything at present.

Socrates paused for some time and thought. XLV.
Then he said, It is not an easy question that you are raising, Cebes. We must examine fully the whole subject of the causes of generation and decay. If you like, I will give you 96.
my own experiences, and if you think that you can make use of anything that I say, you may employ it to satisfy your misgivings.

Indeed, said Cebes, I should like to hear your experiences.

Listen, then, and I will tell you, Cebes, he replied. When I was a young man, I had a passionate desire for the wisdom which is called Physical Science. I thought it a splendid thing to know the causes of everything; why a thing comes into being, and why it perishes, and why it exists. I was always worrying myself with such questions as, Do living creatures take a definite form, as some persons say, from the fermentation of heat and cold? Is it the blood, or the air, or fire by which we think? Or is it none of these, but the brain which gives the senses of hearing and sight and smell, and do memory and opinion come from these, and knowledge from memory and opinion when in a state of quiescence? Again, I used to examine the destruction of these things, and the changes of the heaven and the earth, until at last I con-

cluded that I was wholly and absolutely unfitted for these studies. I will prove that to you conclusively. I was so completely blinded by these studies, that I forgot what I had formerly seemed to myself and to others to know quite well: I unlearnt all that I had been used to think that I understood; even the cause of man's growth. Formerly I had thought it evident on the face of it that the cause of growth was eating and drinking; and that, when from food flesh is added to flesh, and bone to bone, and in the same way to the other parts of the body their proper elements, then by degrees the small bulk grows to be large, and so the boy becomes a man. Don't you think that my belief was reasonable?

I do, said Cebes.

Then here is another experience for you. I used to feel no doubt, when I saw a tall man standing by a short one, that the tall man was, it might be, a head the taller, or, in the same way, that one horse was bigger than another. I was even clearer that ten was more than eight by the addition of two, and that a thing two cubits long was longer by half its length than a thing one cubit long.

And what do you think now? asked Cebes.

I think that I am very far from believing that I know the cause of any of these things. Why, when you add one to one, I am not sure either that the one to which one is added has become two, or that the one added and the one
97. to which it is added become, by the addition,

two. I cannot understand how, when they are brought together, this union, or placing of one by the other, should be the cause of their becoming two, whereas, when they were separated, each of them was one, and they were not two. Nor, again, if you divide one into two, can I convince myself that this division is the cause of one becoming two: for then a thing becomes two from exactly the opposite cause. In the former case it was because two units were brought together, and the one was added to the other; while now it is because they are separated, and the one divided from the other. Nor, again, can I persuade myself that I know how one is generated; in short, this method does not show me the cause of the generation or destruction or existence of anything: I have in my own mind a confused idea of another method, but I cannot admit this one for a moment.

XLVI. But one day I listened to a man who said that he was reading from a book of Anaxagoras, which affirmed that it is Mind which orders and is the cause of all things. I was delighted with this theory; it seemed to me to be right that Mind should be the cause of all things, and I thought to myself, If this is so, then Mind will order and arrange each thing in the best possible way. So if we wish to discover the cause of the generation or destruction or existence of a thing, we must discover how it is best for that thing to exist, or to act, or to be acted on. Man therefore has only to consider what is best and fittest for himself, or for

other things, and then it follows necessarily that he will know what is bad; for both are included in the same science. These reflections made me very happy: I thought that I had found in Anaxagoras a teacher of the cause of existence after my own heart, and I expected that he would tell me first whether the earth is flat or round, and that he would then go on to explain to me the cause and the necessity, and tell me what is best, and that it is best for the earth to be of that shape. If he said that the earth was in the centre of the universe, I thought that he would explain that it was best for it to be there; and I was pre-
98. pared not to require any other kind of cause, if he made this clear to me. In the same way I was prepared to ask questions about the sun, and the moon, and the stars, about their relative speeds, and revolutions, and changes; and to hear why it is best for each of them to act and be acted on as they are acted on. I never thought that, when he said that things are ordered by Mind, he would introduce any reason for their being as they are, except that they are best so. I thought that he would assign a cause to each thing, and a cause to the universe, and then would go on to explain to me what was best for each thing, and what was the common good of all. I would not have sold my hopes for a great deal: I seized the books very eagerly, and read them as fast as I could, in order that I might know what is best and what is worse.

All my splendid hopes were dashed to the XLVII.
ground, my friend, for as I went on reading I found that the writer made no use of Mind at all, and that he assigned no causes for the order of things. His causes were air, and ether, and water, and many other strange things. I thought that he was exactly like a man who should begin by saying that Socrates does all that he does by Mind, and who, when he tried to give a reason for each of my actions, should say, first, that I am sitting here now, because my body is composed of bones and muscles, and that the bones are hard and separated by joints, while the muscles can be tightened and loosened, and, together with the flesh, and the skin which holds them together, cover the bones; and that therefore, when the bones are raised in their sockets, the relaxation and contraction of the muscles makes it possible for me now to bend my limbs, and that that is the cause of my sitting here with my legs bent. And in the same way he would go on to explain why I am talking to you: he would assign voice, and air, and hearing, and a thousand other things as causes; but he would quite forget to mention the real cause, which is that since the Athenians thought it right to condemn me, I have thought it right and just to sit here and to submit to whatever sentence they may think fit to impose. For, by the dog of Egypt, I think that these muscles and bones would long ago have been 99.
in Megara or Bœotia, prompted by their opinion of what is best, if I had not thought it better

and more honourable to submit to whatever penalty the state inflicts, rather than escape by flight. But to call these things causes is too absurd! If it were said that without bones and muscles and the other parts of my body I could not have carried my resolutions into effect, that would be true. But to say that they are the *cause* of what I do, and that in this way I am acting by Mind, and not from choice of what is best, would be a very loose and careless way of talking. It simply means that a man cannot distinguish the real cause from that without which the cause cannot be the cause, and this it is, I think, which the multitude, groping about in the dark, speak of as the cause, giving it a name which does not belong to it. And so one man surrounds the earth with a vortex, and makes the heavens sustain it. Another represents the earth as a flat kneading-trough, and supports it on a basis of air. But they never think of looking for a power which is involved in these things being disposed as it is best for them to be, nor do they think that such a power has any divine strength: they expect to find an Atlas who is stronger and more immortal and abler to hold the world together, and they never for a moment imagine that it is the binding force of good which really binds and holds things together. I would most gladly learn the nature of that kind of cause from any man; but I wholly failed either to discover it myself, or to learn it from any one else. However, I had a second string

to my bow, and perhaps, Cebes, you would like me to describe to you how I proceeded in my search for the cause.

I should like to hear very much indeed, he replied.

When I had given up inquiring into real existence, he proceeded, I thought that I must take care that I did not suffer as people do who look at the sun during an eclipse. For they are apt to lose their eyesight, unless they look at the sun's reflection in water or some such medium. That danger occurred to me. I was afraid that my soul might be completely blinded if I looked at things with my eyes, and tried to grasp them with my senses. So I thought that I must have recourse to conceptions,[1] and examine the truth of existence by means of them. Perhaps my illustration is not quite accurate. I am scarcely prepared to admit that he who examines existence through conceptions is dealing with mere reflections, any more than he who examines it as manifested in sensible objects. However I began in this way. I assumed in each case whatever principle I judged to be strongest; and then I held as true whatever seemed to agree with it, whether in the case of the cause or of anything else, and as untrue, whatever seemed not to agree with it. I should like to explain my meaning more clearly: I don't think you understand me yet. XLVIII. 100.

[1] The conception is the imperfect image in man's mind of the self-existing idea, which Plato speaks of in the next chapter. See *ante*, 74. A. *seq.*; *Rep.* 507. A. *seq.*

Indeed I do not very well, said Cebes.

XLIX. I mean nothing new, he said; only what I have repeated over and over again, both in our conversation to-day and at other times. I am going to try to explain to you the kind of cause at which I have worked, and I will go back to what we have so often spoken of, and begin with the assumption that there exists an absolute beauty, and an absolute good, and an absolute greatness, and so on. If you grant me this, and agree that they exist, I hope to be able to show you what my cause is, and to discover that the soul is immortal.

You may assume that I grant it you, said Cebes; go on with your proof.

Then do you agree with me in what follows? he asked. It appears to me that if anything besides absolute beauty is beautiful, it is so simply because it partakes of absolute beauty, and I say the same of all phenomena. Do you allow that kind of cause?

I do, he answered.

Well then, he said, I no longer recognise, nor can I understand, these other wise causes: if I am told that anything is beautiful because it has a rich colour, or a goodly form, or the like, I pay no attention, for such language only confuses me; and in a simple and plain, and perhaps a foolish way, I hold to the doctrine that the thing is only made beautiful by the presence or communication, or whatever you please to call it, of absolute beauty—I do not wish to insist on the nature of the com-

munication, but what I am sure of is, that it is absolute beauty which makes all beautiful things beautiful. This seems to me to be the safest answer that I can give myself or others; I believe that I shall never fall if I hold to this; it is a safe answer to make to myself or any one else, that it is absolute beauty which makes beautiful things beautiful. Don't you think so?

I do.

And it is size that makes large things large, and larger things larger, and smallness that makes smaller things smaller?

Yes.

And if you were told that one man was taller than another by a head, and that the shorter man was shorter by a head, you would not accept the statement. You would protest that 101.
you say only that the greater is greater by size, and that size is the cause of its being greater; and that the less is only less by smallness, and that smallness is the cause of its being less. You would be afraid to assert that a man is greater or smaller by a head, lest you should be met by the retort, first, that the greater is greater, and the smaller smaller, by the same thing, and secondly, that the greater is greater by a head, which is a small thing, and that it is truly marvellous that a small thing should make a man great. Should you not be afraid of that?

Yes, indeed, said Cebes, laughing.

And you would be afraid to say that ten is more than eight by two, and that two is the

cause of the excess; you would say that ten was more than eight by number, and that number is the cause of the excess? And in just the same way you would be afraid to say that a thing two cubits long was longer than a thing one cubit long by half its length, instead of by size, would you not?

Yes, certainly.

Again, you would be careful not to affirm that, if one is added to one, the addition is the cause of two, or, if one is divided, that the division is the cause of two? You would protest loudly that you know of no way in which a thing can be generated, except by participation in its own proper essence; and that you can give no cause for the generation of two except participation in duality; and that all things which are to be two must participate in duality, while whatever is to be one must participate in unity. You would leave the explanation of these divisions and additions and all such subtleties to wiser men than yourself. You would be frightened, as the saying is, at your own shadow and ignorance, and would hold fast to the safety of our principle, and so give your answer. But if any one should attack the principle itself, you would not mind him or answer him until you had considered whether the consequences of it are consistent or inconsistent, and when you had to give an account of the principle itself, you would give it in the same way, by assuming some other principle which you think the strongest of the higher ones, and so go on until

you had reached a satisfactory resting-place. You would not mix up the first principle and its consequences in your argument, as mere disputants do, if you really wish to discover anything of existence. Such persons will very likely not spend a single word or thought upon that: for they are clever enough to be able to please themselves entirely, though their argument is a chaos. But you, I think, if you are a philosopher, will do as I say. 102.

Very true, said Simmias and Cebes together.

Ech. And they were right, Phædo. I think the clearness of his reasoning, even to the dullest, is quite wonderful.

Phædo. Indeed, Echecrates, all who were there thought so too.

Ech. So do we who were not there, but who are listening to your story. But how did the argument proceed after that?

Phædo. They had admitted that each of the L. Ideas exists, and that Phenomena take the names of the Ideas as they participate in them. Socrates, I think, then went on to ask,—

If you say this, do you not, in saying that Simmias is taller than Socrates and shorter than Phædo, say that Simmias possesses both the attribute of tallness and the attribute of shortness?

I do.

But you admit, he said, that the proposition that Simmias is taller than Socrates is not exactly true, as it is stated: Simmias is not really taller because he is Simmias, but because

of his height. Nor again is he taller than Socrates because Socrates is Socrates, but because of Socrates' shortness compared with Simmias' tallness.

True.

Nor is Simmias shorter than Phædo because Phædo is Phædo, but because of Phædo's tallness compared with Simmias' shortness.

That is so.

Then in this way Simmias is called both short and tall, when he is between the two: he exceeds the shortness of one by the excess of his height, and gives the other a tallness exceeding his own shortness. I daresay you think, he said, smiling, that my language is like a legal document for precision and formality. But I think that it is as I say.

He agreed.

I say it because I want you to think as I do. It seems to me not only that absolute greatness will never be great and small at once, but also that greatness in us never admits smallness, and will not be exceeded. One of two things must happen: either the greater will give way and fly at the approach of its opposite, the less, or it will perish. It will not stand its ground, and receive smallness, and be other than it was, just as I stand my ground, and receive smallness and remain the very same small man that I was. But greatness cannot endure to be small, being great. Just in the same way again smallness in us will never become nor be great: nor will any opposite, while it remains what it was,

become or be at the same time the opposite of what it was. Either it goes away, or it perishes 103.
in the change.

That is exactly what I think, said Cebes. LI.

Thereupon some one—I am not sure who—said,

But surely is not this just the reverse of what we agreed to be true earlier in the argument, that the greater is generated from the less, and the less from the greater, and, in short, that opposites are generated from opposites ?[1] But now it seems to be denied that this can ever happen.

Socrates inclined his head to the speaker and listened. Well and bravely remarked, he said: but you have not noticed the difference between the two propositions. What we said then was that a concrete thing is generated from its opposite: what we say now is that the absolute opposite can never become opposite to itself, either when it is in us, or when it is in nature. We were speaking then of things in which the opposites are, and we named them after those opposites: but now we are speaking of the opposites themselves, whose inherence gives the things their names; and they, we say, will never be generated from each other. At the same time he turned to Cebes and asked, Did his objection trouble you at all, Cebes?

No, replied Cebes; I don't feel that difficulty. But I will not deny that many other things trouble me.

[1] 70 E. *seq.*

Then we are quite agreed on this point, he said. An opposite will never be opposite to itself.

No, never, he replied.

LII. Now tell me again, he said; do you agree with me in this? Are there not things which you call heat and cold?

Yes.

Are they the same as snow and fire?

No, certainly not.

Heat is different from fire, and cold from snow?

Yes.

But I suppose, as we have said, that you do not think that snow can ever receive heat, and yet remain what it was, snow and hot: it will either retire or perish at the approach of heat.

Certainly.

And fire, again, will either retire or perish at the approach of cold. It will never endure to receive the cold and still remain what it was, fire and cold.

True, he said.

Then, it is true of some of these things, that not only the idea itself has a right to its name for all time, but that something else too, which is not the idea, but which has the form of the idea wherever it exists, shares the name. Perhaps my meaning will be clearer by an example. The odd ought always to have the name of odd, ought it not?

Yes, certainly.

Well, my question is this. Is the odd the only

thing with this name, or is there something else, which is not the same as the odd, but which 104.
must always have this name, together with its own, because its nature is such that it is never separated from the odd? There are many examples of what I mean: let us take one of them, the number three, and consider it. Do you not think that we must always call it by the name of odd, as well as by its own name, although the odd is not the same as the number three? Yet the nature of the number three, and of the number five, and of half the whole series of numbers, is such that each of them is odd, though none of them is the same as the odd. In the same way the number two, and the number four, and the whole of the other series of numbers, are each of them always even, though they are not the same as the even. Do you agree or not?

Yes, of course, he replied.

Then see what I want to show you. It is not only opposite ideas which appear not to admit their opposites; things also which are not opposites, but which always contain opposites, seem as if they would not admit the idea which is opposite to the idea that they contain: they either perish, or retire at its approach. Shall we not say that the number three would perish or endure anything sooner than become even while it remains three?

Yes, indeed, said Cebes.

And yet, said he, the number two is not the opposite of the number three.

No, certainly not.

Then it is not only the ideas which will not endure the approach of their opposites; there are some other things besides which will not endure such an approach.

LIII. That is quite true, he said.

Shall we determine, if we can, what is their nature? he asked.

Certainly.

Will they not be those things, Cebes, which force whatever they are in to have always not its own idea only, but the idea of some opposite as well?

What do you mean?

Only what we were saying just now. You know, I think, that whatever the idea of three is in, is bound to be not three only, but odd as well.

Certainly.

Well, we say that the opposite idea to the form which produces this result will never come to that thing.

Indeed, no.

But the idea of the odd produces it?

Yes.

And the idea of the even is the opposite of the idea of the odd?

Yes.

Then the idea of the even will never come to three?

Certainly not.

So three has no part in the even?

None.

Then the number three is uneven?

Yes.

So much for the definition which I undertook to give of things which are not opposites, and yet do not admit opposites; thus we have seen that the number three does not admit the even, though it is not the opposite of the even, for it always brings with it the opposite of the even; and the number two does not admit the odd, nor fire cold, and so on. Do you agree 105.
with me in saying that not only does the opposite not admit the opposite, but also that whatever brings with it an opposite of anything to which it goes, never admits the opposite of that which it brings? Let me recall this to you again; there is no harm in repetition. Five will not admit the idea of the even, nor will the double of five—ten—admit the idea of the odd. It is not itself an opposite,[1] yet it will not admit the idea of the odd. Again, one and a half, a half, and the other numbers of that kind will not admit the idea of the whole, nor again will such numbers as a third. Do you follow and agree?

I follow you and entirely agree with you, he said.

Now begin again, and answer me, he said. LIV.
And imitate me; do not answer me in the terms of my question: I mean, do not give the old safe answer which I have already spoken of, for I see another way of safety, which is the result of what we have been saying. If you ask me, what is that which must be in the body to make

[1] Reading *οὐκ ἐναντίον* (Schanz).

it hot, I shall not give our old safe and stupid answer, and say that it is heat; I shall make a more refined answer, drawn from what we have been saying, and reply, fire. If you ask me, what is that which must be in the body to make it sick, I shall not say sickness, but fever: and again to the question what is that which must be in number to make it odd, I shall not reply oddness, but unity, and so on. Do you understand my meaning clearly yet?

Yes, quite, he said.

Then, he went on, tell me, what is that which must be in a body to make it alive?

A soul, he replied.

And is this always so?

Of course, he said.

Then the soul always brings life to whatever contains her?

No doubt, he answered.

And is there an opposite to life, or not?

Yes.

What is it?

Death.

And we have already agreed that the soul cannot ever receive the opposite of what she brings?

LV. Yes, certainly we have, said Cebes.

Well; what name did we give to that which does not admit the idea of the even?

The uneven, he replied.

And what do we call that which does not admit justice or music?

The unjust, and the unmusical.

Good ; and what do we call that which does not admit death ?

The immortal, he said.

And the soul does not admit death ?

No.

Then the soul is immortal ?

It is.

Good, he said. Shall we say that this is proved ? What do you think ?

Yes, Socrates, and very sufficiently.

Well, Cebes, he said, if the odd had been necessarily imperishable, must not three have 106.
been imperishable ?

Of course.

And if cold had been necessarily imperishable, snow would have retired safe and unmelted, whenever warmth was applied to it. It would not have perished, and it would not have stayed and admitted the heat.

True, he said.

In the same way, I suppose, if warmth were imperishable, whenever cold attacked fire, the fire would never have been extinguished or have perished. It would have gone away in safety.

Necessarily, he replied.

And must we not say the same of the immortal ? he asked. If the immortal is imperishable, the soul cannot perish when death comes upon her. It follows from what we have said that she will not ever admit death, or be in a state of death, any more than three, or the odd itself, will ever be even, or fire, or the heat itself which is in fire, cold. But, it may be said,

Granted that the odd does not become even at the approach of the even; why, when the odd has perished, may not the even come into its place? We could not contend in reply that it does not perish, for the uneven is not imperishable: if we had agreed that the uneven was imperishable, we could have easily contended that the odd and three go away at the approach of the even; and we could have urged the same contention about fire and heat and the rest, could we not?

Yes, certainly.

And now, if we are agreed that the immortal is imperishable, then the soul will be not immortal only, but also imperishable; otherwise we shall require another argument.

Nay, he said, there is no need of that, as far as this point goes; for if the immortal, which is eternal, will admit of destruction, what will not?

LVI. And all men would admit, said Socrates, that God, and the essential form of life, and all else that is immortal, never perishes.

All men, indeed, he said, and, what is more, I think, all gods would admit that.

Then if the immortal is indestructible, must not the soul, if it be immortal, be imperishable?

Certainly, it must.

Then, it seems, when death attacks a man, his mortal part dies, but his immortal part retreats before death, and goes away safe and indestructible.

It seems so.

Then, Cebes, said he, beyond all question the soul is immortal and imperishable; and our souls will indeed exist in the other world. 107.

I, Socrates, he replied, have no more objections to urge; your reasoning has quite satisfied me. If Simmias, or any one else, has anything to say, it would be well for him to say it now: for I know not to what other season he can defer the discussion, if he wants to say or to hear anything touching this matter.

No, indeed, said Simmias; neither have I any further ground for doubt after what you have said. Yet I cannot help feeling some doubts still in my mind; for the subject of our conversation is a vast one, and I distrust the feebleness of man.

You are right, Simmias, said Socrates, and more than that, you must re-examine our original assumptions, however certain they seem to you; and when you have analysed them sufficiently, you will, I think, follow the argument, as far as man can follow it; and when that becomes clear to you, you will seek for nothing more.

That is true he said.

But then, my friends, said he, we must think of this. If it be true that the soul is immortal, we have to take care of her, not merely on account of the time which we call life, but also on account of all time. Now we can see how terrible is the danger of neglect. For if death had been a release from all things, it would have been a godsend to the wicked; for when LVII.

they died they would have been released with their souls from the body and from their own wickedness. But now we have found that the soul is immortal; and so her only refuge and salvation from evil is to become as perfect and wise as possible. For she takes nothing with her to the other world but her education and culture; and these, it is said, are of the greatest service or of the greatest injury to the dead man, at the very beginning of his journey thither. For it is said that the genius, who has had charge of each man in his life, proceeds to lead him, when he is dead, to a certain place, where the departed have to assemble and receive judgment, and then go to the world below with the guide who is appointed to conduct them thither. And when they have received their deserts there, and remained the appointed time, another guide brings them back again after many long revolutions of ages. So this journey is not as Æschylus describes it in the Telephus,
108. where he says that 'a simple way leads to Hades.' But I think that the way is neither simple nor single; there would have been no need of guides had it been so; for no one could miss the way, if there were but one path. But this road must have many branches and many windings, as I judge from the rites of burial on earth.[1] The orderly and wise soul follows her leader, and is not ignorant of the things of that world; but the soul which lusts after the body, flutters

[1] Sacrifices were offered to the gods of the lower world in places where three roads met.

about the body and the visible world for a long time, as I have said, and struggles hard and painfully, and at last is forcibly and reluctantly dragged away by her appointed genius. And when she comes to the place where the other souls are, if she is impure and stained with evil, and has been concerned in foul murders, or if she has committed any other crimes that are akin to these, and the deeds of kindred souls, then every one shuns her and turns aside from meeting her, and will neither be her companion nor her guide, and she wanders about by herself in extreme distress until a certain time is completed, and then she is borne away by force to the habitation which befits her. But the soul that has spent her life in purity and temperance has the gods for her companions and guides, and dwells in the place which befits her. There are many wonderful places in the earth ; and neither its nature nor its size is what those who are wont to describe it imagine, as a friend has convinced me.

What do you mean, Socrates ? said Simmias. I have heard a great deal about the earth myself, but I have never heard the view of which you are convinced. I should like to hear it very much. LVIII.

Well, Simmias, I don't think that it needs the skill of Glaucus to describe it to you, but I think that it is beyond the skill of Glaucus to prove it true : I am sure that I could not do so ; and besides, Simmias, even if I knew how, I think that my life would come to an end before

the argument was finished. But there is nothing to prevent my describing to you what I believe to be the form of the earth, and its regions.

Well, said Simmias, that will do.

In the first place then, said he, I believe that the earth is a spherical body placed in the centre of the heavens, and that therefore it has no need of air or of any other force to support
109. it: the equiformity of the heavens in all their parts, and the equipoise of the earth itself, are sufficient to hold it up. A thing in equipoise placed in the centre of what is equiform cannot incline in any direction, either more or less: it will remain unmoved and in perfect balance. That, said he, is the first thing that I believe.

And rightly, said Simmias.

Also, he proceeded, I think that the earth is of vast extent, and that we who dwell between the Phasis and the pillars of Heracles inhabit only a small portion of it, and dwell round the sea, like ants or frogs round a marsh; and I believe that many other men dwell elsewhere in similar places. For everywhere on the earth there are many hollows of every kind of shape and size, into which the water and the mist and the air collect; but the earth itself lies pure in the purity of the heavens, wherein are the stars, and which men who speak of these things commonly call ether. The water and the mist and the air, which collect into the hollows of the earth, are the sediment of it. Now we dwell in these hollows though we think that we

are dwelling on the surface of the earth. We are just like a man dwelling in the depths of the ocean, who thought that he was dwelling on its surface, and believed that the sea was the heaven, because he saw the sun and the stars through the water; but who was too weak and slow ever to have reached the water's surface, and to have lifted his head from the sea, and come out from his depths to our world, and seen, or heard from one who had seen, how much purer and fairer our world was than the place wherein he dwelt. We are just in that state; we dwell in a hollow of the earth, and think that we are dwelling on its surface; and we call the air heaven, and think it to be the heaven wherein the stars run their courses. But the truth is that we are too weak and slow to pass through to the surface of the air.[1] For if any man could reach the surface, or take wings and fly upward, he would look up and see a world beyond, just as the fishes look forth from the sea, and behold our world. And he would know that that was the real heaven, and the real light, and the real earth, if his nature were able 110
to endure the sight. For this earth, and its stones, and all its regions have been spoilt and corroded, as things in the sea are corroded by the brine: nothing of any worth grows in the sea, nor, in short, is there anything therein without blemish, but, wherever land does exist, there are only caves, and sand, and vast tracts of mud and slime, which are not worthy even

[1] Omitting *εἶναι ταὐτόν* (Schanz).

to be compared with the fair things of our world. But you would think that the things of that other world still further surpass the things of our world. I can tell you a tale, Simmias, about what is on the earth that lies beneath the heavens, which is worth your hearing.

Indeed, Socrates, said Simmias, we should like to hear your tale very much.

LIX. Well, my friend, he said, this is my tale. In the first place, the earth itself, if a man could look at it from above, is like one of those balls which are covered with twelve pieces of leather, and is marked with various colours, of which the colours that our painters use here are, as it were, samples. But there the whole earth is covered with them, and with others which are far brighter and purer ones than they. For part of it is purple of marvellous beauty, and part of it is golden, and the white of it is whiter than chalk or snow. It is made up of the other colours in the same way, and also of colours which are more beautiful than any that we have ever seen. The very hollows in it, that are filled with water and air, have themselves a kind of colour, and glisten amid the diversity of the others, so that its form appears as one unbroken and varied surface. And what grows in this fair earth—its trees and flowers and fruit—is more beautiful than what grows with us in the same proportion: and so likewise are the hills and the stones in their smoothness and transparency and colour: the pebbles which we prize in this

world, our cornelians, and jaspers, and emeralds, and the like, are but fragments of them: but there all the stones are as our precious stones, and even more beautiful still. The reason of this is that they are pure, and not corroded or spoilt, as ours are, with the decay and brine from the sediment that collects in the hollows, and brings to the stones and the earth and all animals and plants deformity and disease. All these things, and with them gold and silver and the like, adorn the real earth: and they 111
are conspicuous from their multitude and size, and the many places where they are found; so that he who could behold it would be a happy man. Many creatures live upon it; and there are men, some dwelling inland, and others round the air, as we dwell round the sea, and others in islands encircled by the air, which lie near the continent. In a word, they use the air as we use water and the sea, and the ether as we use the air. The temperature of their seasons is such that they are free from disease, and live much longer than we do; and in sight, and hearing, and smell, and the other senses, they are as much more perfect than we, as air is purer than water, and ether than air. Moreover they have sanctuaries and temples of the gods, in which the gods dwell in very truth; they hear the voices and oracles of the gods, and see them in visions, and have intercourse with them face to face: and they see the sun and moon and stars as they really are; and in other matters their happiness is of a piece with this.

LX. That is the nature of the earth as a whole, and of what is upon it; and everywhere on its globe there are many regions in the hollows, some of them deeper and more open than that in which we dwell; and others also deeper, but with narrower mouths; and others again shallower and broader than ours. All these are connected by many channels beneath the earth, some of them narrow and others wide; and there are passages, by which much water flows from one of them to another, as into basins, and vast and never-failing rivers of both hot and cold water beneath the earth, and much fire, and great rivers of fire, and many rivers of liquid mud, some clearer and others more turbid, like the rivers of mud which precede the lava stream in Sicily, and the lava stream itself. These fill each hollow in turn, as each stream flows round to it. All of them are moved up and down by a certain oscillation which is in the earth, and which is produced by a natural cause of the following kind. One of the chasms in the earth is larger than all the others, and
112. pierces right through it, from side to side. Homer describes it in the words—

> 'Far away, where is the deepest depth beneath the earth.'[1]

And elsewhere he and many others of the poets have called it Tartarus. All the rivers flow into this chasm, and out of it again; and each of

[1] *Il.* viii. 14.

them comes to be like the soil through which it flows. The reason why they all flow into and out of the chasm is that the liquid has no bottom or base to rest on: it oscillates and surges up and down, and the air and wind around it do the same: for they accompany it in its passage to the other side of the earth, and in its return; and just as in breathing the breath is always in process of being exhaled and inhaled, so there the wind, oscillating with the water, produces terrible and irresistible blasts as it comes in and goes out. When the water retires with a rush to what we call the lower parts of the earth, it flows through to the regions of those streams, and fills them, as if it were pumped into them. And again, when it rushes back hither from those regions, it fills the streams here again, and then they flow through the channels of the earth, and make their way to their several places, and create seas, and lakes, and rivers, and springs. Then they sink once more into the earth, and after making, some a long circuit through many regions, and some a shorter one through fewer, they fall again into Tartarus, some at a point much lower than that at which they rose, and others only a little lower; but they all flow in below their point of issue. And some of them burst forth again on the side on which they entered; others again on the opposite side; and there are some which completely encircle the earth, twining round it, like snakes, once or perhaps oftener, and then fall again into Tartarus, as low down as they can. They can

descend as far as the centre of the earth from either side but no farther. Beyond that point on either side they would have to flow uphill.

LXI. These streams are many, and great, and various ; but among them all are four, of which the greatest and outermost, which flows round the whole of the earth, is called Oceanus. Opposite Oceanus, and flowing in the reverse direction, is Acheron, which runs through
113. desert places, and then under the earth until it reaches the Acherusian lake, whither the souls of the dead generally go, and after abiding there the appointed time, which for some is longer, and for others shorter, are sent forth again to be born as animals. The third river rises between these two, and near its source falls into a vast and fiery region, and forms a lake larger than our sea, seething with water and mud. Thence it goes forth turbid and muddy round the earth, and after many windings comes to the end of the Acherusian lake, but it does not mingle with the waters of the lake ; and after many windings more beneath the earth, it falls into the lower part of Tartarus. This is the river that men name Pyriphlegethon ; and portions of it are discharged in the lava streams, wherever they are found on the earth. The fourth river is on the opposite side : it is said to fall first into a terrible and savage region, of which the colour is one dark blue. It is called the Stygian stream, and the lake which its waters create is called Styx. After falling into the lake and receiving strange

powers in its waters, it sinks into the earth, and runs winding about in the opposite direction to Pyriphlegethon, which it meets in the Acherusian lake from the opposite side. Its waters too mingle with no other waters: it flows round in a circle and falls into Tartarus opposite to Pyriphlegethon. Its name, the poets say, is Cocytus.

Such is the nature of these regions; and LXII
when the dead come to the place whither each is brought by his genius, sentence is first passed on them according as their lives have been good and holy, or not. Those whose lives seem to have been neither very good nor very bad, go to the river Acheron, and embarking on the vessels which they find there, proceed to the lake. There they dwell, and are punished for the crimes which they have committed, and are purified and absolved; and for their good deeds they are rewarded, each according to his deserts. But all who appear to be incurable from the enormity of their sins—those who have committed many and great sacrileges, and foul and lawless murders, or other crimes like these—are hurled down to Tartarus by the fate which is their due, whence they never come forth again. Those who have committed sins which are great, but not too great for atonement, such, for instance, as those who have used violence towards a father or a mother in wrath, and then repented of it for the rest of their lives, or who have committed homicide in some similar way, 114.
have also to descend into Tartarus: but then

when they have been there a year, a wave casts them forth, the homicides by Cocytus, and the parricides and matricides by Pyriphlegethon; and when they have been carried as far as the Acherusian lake they cry out and call on those whom they slew or outraged, and beseech and pray that they may be allowed to come out into the lake, and be received as comrades. And if they prevail, they come out, and their sufferings cease; but if they do not, they are carried back to Tartarus, and thence into the rivers again, and their punishment does not end until they have prevailed on those whom they wronged: such is the sentence pronounced on them by their judges. But such as have been pre-eminent for holiness in their lives are set free and released from this world, as from a prison: they ascend to their pure habitation, and dwell on the earth's surface. And those of them who have sufficiently purified themselves with philosophy, live thenceforth without bodies, and proceed to dwellings still fairer than these, which are not easily described, and of which I have not time to speak now.[1] But for all these reasons, Simmias, we must leave nothing undone that we may obtain virtue and wisdom in this life. Noble is the prize, and great the hope.

LXIII. A man of sense will not insist that these

[1] The account of the rewards and punishments of the next world given in *Rep.* x. 614 B. *seq.*, the story of Er the son of Armenius, is worth comparing with the preceding passage.

things are exactly as I have described them. But I think that he will believe that something of the kind is true of the soul and her habitations, seeing that she is shown to be immortal, and that it is worth his while to stake everything on this belief. The venture is a fair one, and he must charm his doubts with spells like these. That is why I have been prolonging the fable all this time. For these reasons a man should be of good cheer about his soul, if in his life he has renounced the pleasures and adornments of the body, because they were nothing to him, and because he thought that they would do him not good but harm; and if he has instead earnestly pursued the pleasures of learning, and adorned his soul with the adornment of temperance, and justice, and courage, and freedom, and truth, which be- 115.
longs to her, and is her own, and so awaits his journey to the other world, in readiness to set forth whenever fate calls him. You, Simmias and Cebes, and the rest will set forth at some future day, each at his own time. But me now, as a tragic poet would say, fate calls at once; and it is time for me to betake myself to the bath. I think that I had better bathe before I drink the poison, and not give the women the trouble of washing my dead body.

When he had finished speaking Crito said, LXIV.
Be it so, Socrates. But have you any commands for your friends or for me about your children, or about other things? How shall we serve you best?

Simply by doing what I always tell you, Crito. Take care of your own selves, and you will serve me and mine and yourselves in all that you do, even though you make no promises now. But if you are careless of your own selves, and will not follow the path of life which we have pointed out in our discussions both to-day and at other times, all your promises now, however profuse and earnest they are, will be of no avail.

We will do our best, said Crito. But how shall we bury you?

As you please, he answered; only you must catch me first, and not let me escape you. And then he looked at us with a smile and said, My friends, I cannot convince Crito that I am the Socrates who has been conversing with you, and arranging his arguments in order. He thinks that I am the body which he will presently see a corpse, and he asks how he is to bury me. All the arguments which I have used to prove that I shall not remain with you after I have drunk the poison, but that I shall go away to the happiness of the blessed, with which I tried to comfort you and myself, have been thrown away on him. Do you therefore be my sureties to him, as he was my surety at the trial, but in a different way. He was surety for me then that I would remain; but you must be my sureties to him that I shall go away when I am dead, and not remain with you: then he will feel my death less; and when he sees my body being burnt or buried, he will not

be grieved because he thinks that I am suffering dreadful things: and at my funeral he will not say that it is Socrates whom he is laying out, or bearing to the grave, or burying. For, dear Crito, he continued, you must know that to use words wrongly is not only a fault in itself; it also creates evil in the soul. You must be of good cheer, and say that you are burying my body: and you must bury it as you please, and 116.
as you think right.

With these words he rose and went into LXV.
another room to bathe himself: Crito went with him and told us to wait. So we waited, talking of the argument, and discussing it, and then again dwelling on the greatness of the calamity which had fallen upon us: it seemed as if we were going to lose a father, and to be orphans for the rest of our life. When he had bathed, and his children had been brought to him,—he had two sons quite little, and one grown up,—and the women of his family were come, he spoke with them in Crito's presence, and gave them his last commands; then he sent the women and children away, and returned to us. By that time it was near the hour of sunset, for he had been a long while within. When he came back to us from the bath he sat down, but not much was said after that. Presently the servant of the Eleven came and stood before him and said, 'I know that I shall not find you unreasonable like other men, Socrates. They are angry with me and curse me when I bid them drink the poison because the authorities

make me do it. But I have found you all along the noblest and gentlest and best man that has ever come here; and now I am sure that you will not be angry with me, but with those who you know are to blame. And so farewell, and try to bear what must be as lightly as you can; you know why I have come.' With that he turned away weeping, and went out.

Socrates looked up at him, and replied, Farewell: I will do as you say. Then he turned to us and said, How courteous the man is! And the whole time that I have been here, he has constantly come in to see me, and sometimes he has talked to me, and has been the best of men; and now, how generously he weeps for me! Come, Crito, let us obey him: let the poison be brought if it is ready; and if it is not ready, let it be prepared.

Crito replied: Nay, Socrates, I think that the sun is still upon the hills; it has not set. Besides, I know that other men take the poison quite late, and eat and drink heartily, and even enjoy the company of their chosen friends, after the announcement has been made. So do not hurry; there is still time.

Socrates replied: And those whom you speak of, Crito, naturally do so; for they think that they will be gainers by so doing. And I naturally shall not do so; for I think that I should gain
117. nothing by drinking the poison a little later, but my own contempt for so greedily saving up a life which is already spent. So do not refuse to do as I say.

Then Crito made a sign to his slave who was LXVI
standing by; and the slave went out, and after some delay returned with the man who was to give the poison, carrying it prepared in a cup. When Socrates saw him, he asked, You understand these things, my good sir, what have I to do?

You have only to drink this, he replied, and to walk about until your legs feel heavy, and then lie down; and it will act of itself. With that he handed the cup to Socrates, who took it quite cheerfully, Echecrates, without trembling, and without any change of colour or of feature, and looked up at the man with that fixed glance of his, and asked, What say you to making a libation from this draught? May I, or not? We only prepare so much as we think sufficient, Socrates, he answered. I understand, said Socrates. But I suppose that I may, and must, pray to the gods that my journey hence may be prosperous: that is my prayer; be it so. With these words he put the cup to his lips and drank the poison quite calmly and cheerfully. Till then most of us had been able to control our grief fairly well; but when we saw him drinking, and then the poison finished, we could do so no longer: my tears came fast in spite of myself, and I covered my face and wept for myself: it was not for him, but at my own misfortune in losing such a friend. Even before that Crito had been unable to restrain his tears, and had gone away; and Apollodorus, who had never once ceased weeping the whole time, burst into a loud cry,

and made us one and all break down by his sobbing and grief, except only Socrates himself. What are you doing, my friends? he exclaimed. I sent away the women chiefly in order that they might not offend in this way; for I have heard that a man should die in silence. So calm yourselves and bear up. When we heard that we were ashamed, and we ceased from weeping. But he walked about, until he said that his legs were getting heavy, and then he lay down on his back, as he was told. And the man who gave the poison began to examine his feet and legs, from time to time: then he pressed his foot hard, and asked if there was any feeling in it; and Socrates said, No: and
118. then his legs, and so higher and higher, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And Socrates felt himself, and said that when it came to his heart, he should be gone. He was already growing cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, which had been covered, and spoke for the last time. Crito, he said, I owe a cock to Asclepius; do not forget to pay it.[1] It shall be done, replied Crito. Is there anything else that you wish? He made no answer to this question; but after a short interval there was a movement, and the man

[1] These words probably refer to the offering usually made to Asclepius on recovery from illness. Death is a release from the 'fitful fever of life.' See, for instance, 66 B. *seq.*, 67 C. Another explanation is to make the word refer to the omission of a trifling religious duty.

uncovered him, and his eyes were fixed. Then Crito closed his mouth and his eyes.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend, a man, I think, who was the wisest and justest, and the best man that I have ever known.

THE END

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